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Exploring Self-Perceived Employability in People with Disabilities and Other Intersecting Identities

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EXPLORING SELF-PERCEIVED EMPLOYABILITY IN PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

AND OTHER INTERSECTING IDENTITIES

A Dissertation

by

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ABSTRACT

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People with disabilities are the largest minority group in the world representing 26% of the world's population. More specifically, in the U.S. 61 million Americans have a diagnosed disability. However, intersectionality studies have not been inclusive of this particular population and disability studies have yet to extensively examine intersectionality in PWDs. Centering individuals with disabilities who also identify with multiple marginalized social identities , such as being a woman, a person of color or a member of the LGBT community is important since these individuals' experiences are not uniform in nature. PWDs experience higher rates of discrimination, unemployment, and underemployment especially when compared to people without disabilities. The combined consequences of membership in multiple marginalized groups can lead to psychological distress, lower self-esteem and lower self-confidence. Due to the disproportionality of PWDs in the labor market it is essential for rehabilitation counselors to understand the complexities of intersectionality including internal and external barriers that influence employment outcomes. The primary focus of this study is to examine how membership in multiple minority groups influence self-perceived employability specifically in people with disabilities.

DEDICATION

The completion of my doctoral studies would not have been possible without the love and support of my family. My mother, Lelia Daniel, my father Kerry Daniel, my brother Kerrick Daniel, who fervently loved, supported, and encouraged me to never give up no matter how hard the challenge or obstacle. Finally, to my grandparents Lela Daniel, Richard Daniel, and Annie G. Keys who have passed on, your sacrifice and desire to evoke change in your local communities and nationwide paved the way for me to accomplish this monumental feat. Thank you for your love, support, patience, and sacrifice.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Historically, American society and the views projected by its leaders, have purported to be a fair and democratic society believing in the rule of justice, and justice for all Americans. The Statue of Liberty conveys a similar sentiment in that the United States is an egalitarian and utilitarian country that is accepting of all peoples from all cultures. Unfortunately, American history and the subjugation of persons of minority status and those who are different has a long and sordid past of genocide (Ostler, 2015), slavery (Roberts, 2016), sterilization (Igdalsky, 2016) segregation (Geismer, 2016), imprisonment (Omori & Johnson,2019), oppression and inequality (Draper, 2017). Strides towards equality have been initiated through monumental shifts in legislation such as the (a) Women's Suffrage Act 1919, (b) Brown vs. Board of Education 1954, (c) Rehabilitation Act of 1973, (d) Americans with Disabilities Act 1990, (e) Equality Act 2015, and (f) Civil Rights Act of 1964. These specific acts have granted various minority groups equal opportunities as citizens in the workplace, education, and transportation (American Civil Liberties Union, 2020).

The residual effects of oppression throughout the course of history and more specifically intergenerationally are still relevant in today's society (Van Wormer & Link, 2016). For example, pay inequalities still exist between men and women in the United States of America, although women's participation in the U.S. labor force has increased from 32.8% in 1948 to 56.8% in 2016 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020). On average white women earn 77 cents

for every dollar a white male earns even though women have taken on more non-traditional roles (i.e., sole breadwinners and corporate America). The pay gap widens with the addition of race (i.e., African American, or Hispanic) as an intersecting identity with gender (Chu & Posner, 2013). Such that, African American, Hispanic, and American Indian women earn 61, 53, and 58 cents to every dollar a white male earns. The presence of oppression over lifetimes and generations can lead to internalized feelings of unworthiness, low collective self-esteem, and inferiority of one's own social group known as internalized oppression (David, 2013; Friere, 1970). Multiple scholars agree that internalized oppression is a by-product of oppression and indeed causes a far more harmful psychological disturbance than overt external acts of oppression such as hate speech and discrimination (Pyke, 2010; Speight, 2007; Szymanski & Henrich's-Beck, 2014). Researchers suggest that internalized oppression is perpetuated generationally through the intermeshing of negative stereotypes with one's own cultural norms (Lipsky, 1987; Paradies, 2016; Tawa, Suyemoto, & Tauriac, 2013).

This phenomenon is exacerbated at various levels known as microaggressions (David, 2013). Microaggressions as defined by Pierce (1974), are subtle, commonplace, incessant, ambiguous, continual insults, invalidations, or assaults aimed at racial and other minority groups. Although, microaggressions are generally brief, they oftentimes serve as a conduit for perpetuating racial hierarchy and domination (Chen & Lin, 2016). Camara and Orbe (2010) suggest extending micro aggressive acts beyond race into other minority groups to include (a) gender, (b) disability, (c) sexual orientation, and (d) age. Through a co-cultural framework, the investigators postulate that individuals in multiple disadvantaged groups may experience

discriminatory verbal assaults, intentional and unintentional on varying levels depending on membership in either of their marginalized groups.

Deconstructing internalized oppressions through a lens of intersectionality can act as a catalyst for examining the complexities of multiple intersecting identities. The intersectionality framework provides a platform to examine how multiple identities interact with each other in relation to the individual, societally, institutionally, and organizationally. Exploring those intersecting identities, is pivotal in extrapolating measures that can be taken to assist these individuals to gain acceptance, work/career satisfaction, and initiate increased levels of performance (Byrd, 2014). Social identity is introduced by Byrd (2012) as a form of distinction marginalized groups experience in systems, organizations, and society where their various identities create complex dynamics that need to be addressed. Conversely, Gopaldas (2013) suggests there are advantages and disadvantages to ascribing to multiple marginalized/social identities simultaneously depending on the circumstance.

However, researchers report a disproportionality of the negative consequences associated with intersecting identities rather than overt benefits. While multiple oppressions have an impact on self-perception, membership into just one of those marginalized groups may also pose problems for individuals (Goodley, 2010). Szymanski and Gupta (2009) examine the effects of multiple internalized oppressions such as internalized racism (IR) and internalized heterosexism (IH) on self-esteem and psychological distress. In a sample of 106 African Americans who also identify as members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and queer (LGBQ) community, researchers found that self-esteem was negatively correlated with IR ($r =-.46$) and IH ($r =-.37$) with a large effect size of .80 indicating how much of a difference exist between two variables. A small effect size indicates that the difference between two variables is not noticeable or important whereas a

medium or large effect size indicates that the difference between the two variables is noticeable. Self-esteem is measured on multiple levels such as personal which assesses one's valuation of self (Rosenburg,1965), while collective self-esteem considers the value one places on self as a member of his or her social group which is categorized into four levels known as membership, public, private and identity (Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992). Fischer and Holz (2007) explore perceptions of discrimination against women in relation to women's view of their ascribed social group. In a sample of 257 women, researchers found a negative correlation between perceived sexist discrimination and public collective self-esteem (CSE) ($r = -.21$) with a small effect size indicated by Pearson's correlation (*r) values*. Campon and Carter (2015) found a significant negative relationship between internalized racial oppression and three of the four proponents used in defining collective self-esteem. Internalized racial oppression was found to be a significant predictor of membership collective self-esteem with a small effect size of .05.

Similarly, to the notion of multiple internalized oppressions having an effect on self-esteem and psychological distress, Szymanski and Stewart (2010) explored the association of two specific oppressions (e.g. racism and sexism) that moderate the relationship between specific external oppressive events and psychological distress in a sample of 160 African American women between 18 and 77 years of age. The sample size used was large enough to achieve a statistical power of .80 resulting in a moderate effect size based on Pearson's *r* values. A correlational analysis yielded results pointing to positive relationship between psychological distress and internalized racism ($r = .27$) and perceived sexism ($r = .38$). Furthermore, a greater prevalence of perceived racist events was positively correlated with sexist events ($r = .42$). Age was negatively correlated with internalized racism and perceived sexist events ($r = -.27$) and ($r = -.38$) respectively, such that a lower prevalence of internalized racism and perceived sexist

events was associated with increased age. Given the scant research base on how internalized oppressions impact an individual in terms of self-efficacy and/or self-esteem, researchers have largely ignored explorations to conceptualize the relationship between self-efficacy, self-esteem, psychological distress and their influence on self-perceived employability in those labeled as minorities.

Vanhercke et al., (2013) provide a framework that explores employability in terms of a psychological approach which include both personal and structural factors. Self-perceived employability refers to a person's perception of the likelihood of securing and sustaining employment in relation to personal characteristics that permit him or her to retain a sense of autonomy over demanding and quickly changing situations in the workforce. Personal factors include all traits related to the individual (i.e., age, self-efficacy, self-perceptions, and education). Structural factors include organizational demands, career transitions, and financial incentives which if not situated in an accessible way can lead to further exclusion of those in minority groups. While self-perceived employability encompasses the personal and structural aspects of employability, De Cuyper et al. (2012) promote the competences-based approach to self-perceived employability which includes a person's perception of his or her abilities, capacities, and skills in attaining employment. In addition to the competencies-based approach he also explicates the depositional approach to self-perceived employability which suggests individuals also rely on their proactive attitudes to work as a measure of this construct (De Cuyper et al., 2012; Fugate & Kinicki, 2008). Researchers show deficits in employment among minority status groups that are germane to exclusion (Shier et al., 2009), discrimination (Owuamalam & Zagefka, 2014), and diminishing of these individuals' self-efficacy and self-esteem (Thompson et al., 2019) which negatively impact self-perceived employability.

Further corroborating the marginalization of minority groups in employment Shier et al., (2009) used ethnographic techniques to assess the experiences of 56 individuals with disabilities and their integration into the labor force. They suggest employers' perceptions of persons disability act a barrier more so than providing the necessary workplace accommodations. Multiple barriers were identified to hindering participation in the labor force on a personal and societal level. Barriers included inadequate transportation, lack of support networks, self-esteem, past influences, and employer's perception of the disability. Thompson et al. (2019) explored the nature of the relationships between psychological stress, self-esteem, and career decision self-efficacy in a sample of 292 racially diverse (African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, East Indians, Asian Americans, and mixed race) diverse participants indicating a small effect size. Mean scores on the psychological distress and career decision self-efficacy assessments differed significantly between minorities and white/European participants such that minority participants scored higher on the psychological distress assessment and lower on the career decision self-efficacy assessment than white/European counterparts. A regression analysis using race and ethnicity as covariates detected self-esteem and psychological stress to be significant indicators of career decision making efficacy. Employment and labor market settings are described as social, institutional, organizational, or consumer-oriented constructs by which an individual's identity whether socially or personally constructed can influence their experiences within that context. In light of strides made to provide equal access and opportunities to all of its citizens, persistent pay gaps still exist among genders, races, sexual orientations, and disability status (Pew Research Center, 2017). The Pew Research Center (2017) released a report on workplace discrimination where 42% of women, roughly four in ten women report workplace discrimination on the basis of gender. In addition, one in four women report earning less than a

man with the same education and job duties (Graf et al., 2019). Although women with disabilities make up 4% of the total population they only represent 1.5% of the workforce (Kraus et al., 2018). According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2019), the employment rate for persons with disabilities stood at 19.3% while the employment rate for persons without disabilities is 66.3%. Inadequacies exist between racial minorities with disabilities and whites with disabilities. For example, the unemployment rate for African Americans and Hispanics with a disability was 11.8% and 8.6% respectively while only 6.6% of whites with disabilities were unemployed (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019). Discrimination of persons with disabilities in employment is exacerbated by discrimination based on sexual orientation putting individuals in this particular population at greater risk for to acquiring and maintaining employment. In the U.S. approximately 3.5 million individuals identify as members of the LGBT community with a disability (Movement Advancement Project, 2017). Eliason et al. (2011) suggest membership in just one marginalized group causes significant barriers to employment for this population. In a sample of 427 physicians who identify as LGBT members from the subgroup of the American Medical Association known as the Gay and Lesbian Medical Association. Researchers found (27%) witnessed discrimination against LGBT employees, (10%) denied referrals, (22%) socially isolated, and (65%) witnessed disparaging comments, (34%) witnessed discriminatory care of LGBT patients, (36%) witnessed disrespectful comments and actions made towards a LGBT patient's partner. The responses were solicited based on content from the Negative workplace experiences related to sexual or gender identity. In comparison to the first set of responses recorded in 1994, the negative experiences of LGBT physicians have decreased but has not been completely eliminated (Eliason et al., 2011).

Statement of the Problem

Intersectionality is a phenomenon that stems from race and feminist theorists that suggest consequences are associated with each marginalized identity a person identifies with and can increase the likeliness of discrimination and psychological distress (Cole, 2009). Research is limited on the interactive effects of multiple minority identities that incite varying levels of internalized oppression on an individual's experience with employment. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2018) only 19.3% of people with a disability are employed compared to 66.3% of people without disabilities. Goethals et al., (2015) conducted a review of the literature and noted that people with disabilities were presumed to share the same perspectives, experiences, and concerns regardless of key elements such as race, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, and religion. It is noted that women, racial minorities, lesbian, gay or bisexual individuals, older individuals and those with disabilities have less access to opportunities in the workforce and are more likely to experience discrimination. For example, women are 38 percent more likely to live in poverty compared to men. In 2016, two out of five women lived in extreme poverty meaning their average income was 50% below the national poverty level (Patrick, 2017). Women with disabilities have an even greater chance of living at or below the poverty line, such that 16.2 million children lived at or below the poverty line in 2016 with over half of those having a single mother as the head of household (Patrick, 2017).

In relation to this study, several factors play a role in securing and maintaining employment for individuals with disabilities. Notably, traits such as employment status (Huysse-Gaytandjieva, 2015), level of education, self-esteem (Jeong et al., 2019), stigma (Norlander et al., 2020), and a host of other demographic traits including gender, race, and sexual orientation can prove advantageous or disadvantageous in the labor market especially those in the

abovementioned stigmatized groups. Past researchers have found that stigma is perceived in two distinct ways, controllable and uncontrollable garnering either a positive or negative response (Schwarzer & Weiner, 1991; Weiner et al., 1988). For example, an individual who uses a wheelchair as a result of an automobile accident while driving under the influence versus an individual who uses a wheelchair due to muscular dystrophy will elicit a more negative response than the person using the wheelchair because of an uncontrollable disease. Thus, assumptions are made about an individual's perceived control over their circumstance and whether or not the stigma or marginalization they experience can be attributed to their own actions rendering them deserving of isolation and rejection. This belief system is often times associated to individuals in the LGBT community and other racial minorities in employment, health services, and mental health services. (Ramirez-Valles et al., 2013).

Racial discrimination as well as discrimination based on sex both have implications for lowering self-esteem due to an internalized devaluation of oneself based on how society or the majority views their respective group (Kong, 2016; Kim & Park, 2018). However, the literature is not consistent and lacks depth in extrapolating the collective self-esteem one feels in relation to his or her social group and the impact on self-perceived employability. Unemployment status as a social identity is also an area lacking in the literature by which those who are unemployed may feel disenfranchised in job seeking due to perceptions of unemployment as a choice or as a defect in character (Norlander, 2020; Staiger et al., 2018). Darity (2003) poses that across racial groups unemployed status not only decreases self-esteem, internal locus of control, confidence, but increases feelings of anxiety, depression, and alienation. Moreover, the combined ramifications of race, disability, gender, collective self-esteem, education, employment status, and sexual orientation on self-perceived employability have not been thoroughly explored.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is twofold. First an examination of the relationship between marginalized intersecting identities such as race, gender, disability, and sexual orientation on self-perceived employability. Next, the interactive effects of multiple internalized oppressions, employment status, and education, on self-perceived employability will be explored. While the research is consistent in exploring the experiences of women, LGBT members, racial minorities, persons with disabilities and older persons as it relates to reduced access to opportunities, the literature is scant on the integrated effects of persons with disabilities and their co-membership in other marginalized groups (Shaw et al., 2012). As previously stated, the presence of multiple marginalized identities poses multiple disadvantages in education, healthcare, transportation, and the workplace (David, 2013; Gopaldas, 2013). Researchers have frequently reported the disproportionality of people with disabilities experiencing higher rates of underemployment, job insecurity, unemployment, involuntary part-time through the lens of employer attitudes and workplace accommodations (Baldridge et al., 2015; Bonaccio et al., 2020 ; Konrad, et al., 2013), but the employment gap steadily widens in favor of their counterparts without disabilities (Kraus et al., 2018; Lauer & Houtenville, 2017). This study will assess the individual with a disability through the lens of self-perceived employability while considering the presence of intersecting identities (i.e., race, gender, disability type, collective self-esteem, sexual orientation). As such the following research questions and hypotheses are explored:

1. Do multiple internalized oppressions (i.e., internalized feelings due to bias and stereotypes associated with membership in multiple social groups such as being a woman (sexism), being lesbian or gay (heterosexism), being a person with a disability (ableism) or of the African American race (racism), influence self-perceived employability?

H₀ 1: There is no relationship between multiple minority status identities and self-perceived employability.

Hₐ 1: There is a relationship between multiple minority status identities and self-perceived employability.

2. Is there a relationship between collective self-esteem and membership in multiple minority groups?

    H₀ 2: There is no relationship between collective self-esteem membership in multiple minority groups.

    Hₐ 2: There is a relationship between collective self-esteem membership in multiple minority groups.

3. What characteristics (gender, disability type, sexual orientation, race, or age) predict self-perceived employability?

    H₀3: Gender, race, sexual orientation, or age, independently or in combination, do not predict self-perceived employability.

    Hₐ3: Gender, race, sexual orientation, or age, independently or in combination, do predict self-perceived employability.

4. Does a certain disability type (i.e., sensory, mental, or physical) predict self-perceived employability?

    H₀ 4: Different disability types, independently or in combination, do not predict self-perceived employability.

    Hₐ 4: Different disability types, independently or in combination, do predict self-perceived employability.

5. Is there a relationship between level of education and self-perceived employability?

H₀ 5: There is no relationship between level of education and self-perceived employability?

Hₐ 5: There is a relationship between level of education and self-perceived employability?

6. Is there a relationship between years of work experience and self-perceived employability?

    H₀ 6: There is no relationship between years of work experience and self-perceived employability.

    Hₐ 6: There is a relationship between years of work experience and self-perceived employability. *All hypotheses will be tested at the .05 alpha level

7. Is there a relationship between employment status (employed or not employed) and self-perceived employability?

    H₀7: There is no relationship between employment status and self-perceived employability.

    Hₐ7: There is a relationship between employment status and self-perceived employability.

*All hypotheses will be tested at the .05 alpha level

Significance of the study

The significance of this study serves to fill in a critical gap within in the disability literature that does not include varying minority statuses in addition to disability status. The current literature available is in relation to comparing those with disabilities to those without disabilities and one marginalized identity. However, the interaction of multiple identity statuses specifically for those with disabilities is not included. There are vast differences, privileges, advantages, disadvantages, and disproportionalities that exist between men and women, people with and without disabilities, racial minorities, and the majority as well as sexual orientation minorities and heterosexual individuals in employment, socio-economic status, education, and poverty. This study is being conducted in hopes to broaden the knowledge of practicing rehabilitation counselors in engaging clients on issues concerning all of their identities rather

than focusing one. Moreover, rehabilitation counselors will gain a more meaningful understanding of how multiple minority status identities interact and what role they play in self-perceived employability. This study will examine what affect the independent variables; race, gender, sexual orientation, employment status, level of education, and disability status have on the dependent variable self-perceived employability.

Limitations

The first limitation of this study concerns selection bias. A convenience sample was used specifically with social media platforms (i.e., Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat) which also limited the sample to individuals who had the technology to access these platforms. The study was also limited to individuals who had a disability which inherently limits the generalizability of the results due to the participation stipulation. The results will not be generalizable to all people with disabilities unless they have the same characteristics of the participants in the study. Another limitation is that the data will be collected utilizing self-report measures which essentially makes it impossible to determine whether or not participants complete the questionnaire themselves or if they fully understand the questions being asked of them. Relatedly, any self-reporting survey assumes the participant will be truthful in his or her responses.

Terminology

Table 1

Terminology

Term	Definition
Internalized Oppression	internalized feelings of unworthiness, and inferiority of one's own social group (David, 2013; Friere, 1970; Memmi, 1965).
Microaggressions	subtle, commonplace, incessant, ambiguous, continual insults, invalidations, or assaults aimed at racial and other minority groups (Pierce, 1974, p.516).
Collective Self-esteem	pertains to an individuals' subjective assessment of that portion of their self-concept that is based on their membership in social groups, such as families, teams, or schools, as well as on categories that have psychological significance for them, such as race, ethnicity, or nationality (American Psychological Association, n.d.)
Intersectionality framework	a theoretical framework that examines how multiple identities interact with each other in relation to the individual, societally, institutionally, and organizationally.
Self-perceived employability	refers to a person's perception of the likelihood of securing and sustaining employment in relation to personal characteristics that permit him or her to retain a sense of autonomy over demanding and quickly changing situations in the workforce (Vanhercke et al., 2013).
Social capital	resources gained or earned through relationships, networking, and social settings that can be used for personal benefit (Mithen et al., 2015).

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

All forms of oppression (i.e., ableism, sexism, heterosexism, racism) are evidenced at the sociopolitical and individual level (Szymanski et al., 2008). People with disabilities account for 15% of the world's population which makes this particular minority group one of the largest in the world (World Report on Disability, 2011). Specifically, 26% of the U.S. population has a disability which equates to 61 million Americans (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2018). Goethals et al. (2015) review of the literature suggests that people with disabilities (PWD) are often excluded in studies concerning intersectionality. People with disabilities are assumed to share commonalities solely based on his or her disability. Factors such as race, religion, sexual orientation, gender, and socioeconomic status are not included, but can impose barriers based on membership in multiple minority groups. The social model of disability contends that societal attitudes and barriers are more disabling than the disability itself. Conversely, the medical model considers the origins, disease, and injury that led to the disability and insinuates that people are disabled due their impairments not attitudinal barriers (Clute, 2013; Goering, 2015).

Campbell (2008) contends that people with disabilities are viewed as broken or damaged, with a diminished capacity to create or sustain economic capital. This ideology is a focal point in disability studies exploring workplace dynamics. Individuals with disabilities are immediately appraised for what they are unable to do, an idiosyncrasy that follows them in most social settings (Shakespeare, 2006). Therefore, as stated by Foster and Wass (2013), although mentally

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taxing and hard to construct, it is necessary for people with disabilities to build positive

workplace identities. They also posit the impact of language in job descriptions seeking the

quintessential employee with descriptors such as "must be able to multitask" and "may be

required to provide physically demanding tasks" that reinforce the ableist view and those with

disabilities are deemed as inadequate or unfit thus creating an additional barrier to employment

Types of Oppression

Sexism

Sexism takes on the form of prejudice and discrimination based on gender especially in

women and girls (Masequesmay, 2019). Gender inequality and sexism are not unique to the U.S.

Hvistendahl (2011) report over 160 million females missing from the general population in Asia

due to female infanticide, while globally roughly 40% of nations favor educating boys rather

than girls (United Nations Educational and Cultural Organization, 2014). David (2013) posits

sexism as a socio-structural barrier that exists at three levels (i.e., institutionalized, interpersonal,

and internalized) and in two distinct forms (i.e., benevolent and hostile). First, institutionalized

sexism happens when sexism is intertwined in the political, social, and economic institutions. For

example, laws and practices that inhibit or curtail women's right as well as the portrayal of

women as objects of sexual gratification are forms of institutionalized sexism (Calogero & Jost,

2011). Interpersonal sexism takes place on the individual level during personal interactions in

everyday life. This level of sexism is channeled through daily interactions when an individual

reinforces negative stereotypes about women such as women are the weaker sex, too emotional,

or when a man makes nonconsensual advances, thereby reiterating that women are objects of sex

(David, 2013). Finally, internalized sexism occurs between women even without the presence of

a man. Women who believe themselves to inferior or less deserving of the same rights and

privileges of men. Internalized sexism is often perpetuated by women when they devalue another woman or attach her worth to physical attractiveness (David, 2013). Radke et al. (2016) maintained that benevolent and hostile sexism work in conjunction as socio-structural barriers working in conjunction to penalize women who do not go against normative gender roles and rewards those who embrace and embody those normative gender roles.

Major legislative acts such as women's suffrage act which extended voting rights to women and the Civil Rights movement of 1964 which provided equal employment protections for minorities including women and people of color (U.S. Const. amend. XIX; Civil Rights Act, 1964). Although the passage of legislation has extended rights to women in terms of voting rights and workplace discrimination, 42% still report workplace discrimination strictly on the basis of gender. Another one in four women report earning less that than a man with comparable education and work duties (Graf et al., 2019; Pew Research Center, 2017).

Ableism

Ableism is a form of discrimination based on the premise of able-bodied people or better known as people without disabilities being deemed as normal whereas, people with disabilities are viewed as inferior and inept (Editor of Encyclopedia Britannica, 2013). Loja et al. (2013) explore how ableist dialogues about impaired bodies has influenced and been resisted by people with physical disabilities in a sample of seven people. Researchers compiled a set of four categories aligned with previous works to describe the nature of ableism which include the non-disabled gaze, physical capital, negotiation and resistance, and disabled identity. The non-disabled gaze is described as stares or gazes from non-disabled people that negate the normalcy of the bodies of people with disabilities. Respondents in the study perceived the gazes from non-disabled people as pity, curiosity, as a person in need of charity or as a disabled hero. Other

encounters with the non-disabled gaze evoked feelings of anger, humiliation, and feeling like an object of pity in respondents More importantly, in relation to the current study, participants acknowledge physical barriers at the workplace that subvert the social capital building and professional faculties of people with disabilities. In terms of negotiation and resistance, while some respondents celebrated their differences and resisted the idea of conforming or adjusting, others attempted to conform to normative body and beauty standards set by ableist constructs in society. Finally, disability identity was attributed to the ideal of normalcy rooted in the medical model of disability which influenced the conceptualization of disability as a physical, moral, emotional, mental, and spiritual shortcoming (Loja et al., 2013). The medical model of disability presents the disability a person has as the problem which can only be fixed by way of medical treatment. This model is in direct contrast of the social model of disability which posits that the discrepancy lies between the person with the disability and the environment (Goering, 2015).

Bourdieu (2008) suggests that the body is a type of capital, indicator of power and or status, all of which may be used to gather varying resources and manifest them into other forms of capital (i.e., socially, culturally, economically, or emotionally) and used for their benefit. Some people with disabilities may be invalidated by the non-disabled gaze which undercuts their physical capital thereby inhibiting their ability to transform it into other forms of capital such as economic, cultural, social, and emotional. Additionally, some people with physical disabilities may struggle with intercorporeality which asserts that social cognitions can be understood by focusing on one's own body in relation to another (Merleau-Ponty, 1962; Shogo, 2015).

Hughes and Paterson (1997) maintain that physical limitations or impairments shapes intercorporeal interactions between people with and without disabilities and could be detrimental to the person with the disability. Architectural barriers were emphasized as a limitation to social

comfort in public spaces while simultaneously diminishing the capacity to incur social capital in social settings. Tregaskis (2004) insists that identity is paramount, especially for those that are in marginalized groups whose selfhood is consistently questioned by those in majority. The Americans with Disabilities Act of (1990) provided protections for people with disabilities in employment, public accommodations, transportation, telecommunications, and miscellaneous provisions which allow for more inclusion in society.

Racism

Rodgers (2015) defines racism as a ubiquitous, endemic construct historically situated in systematic and institutionalized assumptions based on the superiority of one race over another. New forms of racism in the workplace affect minorities especially those American born African Americans according to Howard and Borgella (2020) Black Americans are more likely to be discriminated against in the hiring process than Black Africans. Racism is defined on varying levels that include individual, cultural, institutional, symbolic, aversive, and color-blind racism. Cultural racism is incited when the norms, beliefs, and ideals of one group are perpetuated to be superior of those in another group solely based on race. Institutional racism exists at the sociopolitical level whereby laws, legislation, and policies were used as tools of oppression to relinquish those of basic rights and privileges of those in minority groups such as the Indian Removal Act of 1830 and slavery. Individual racism concludes that those individuals who believe their race is superior will act out towards those deemed inferior (David, 2013; Jones, 1997). Symbolic racism is delegated into four elements that include (a) refusal to acknowledge that racial discrimination still exists (Henry & Sears, 2002), (b) belief that a minority group's lack of progress is due to their reluctance to work hard (Kinder & Sears, 1981), (c) excessive demand which insinuates that racial minorities demand too much in terms of equality (Sears &

Henry, 2003), and (d) underserved advantage which poses the ideal that racial minorities have received more than is deserved (Sears et al., 1997). Finally, colorblind racism is the notion that the United States is in a post-racial area where color barriers no longer exist especially after the election of Barack Obama (David, 2013; Haney-Lopez, 2011).

Researchers suggest that internalized racism may lead to reduced mental and physical health outcomes (James, 2020). A recent meta-analysis of 29 studies with 32 effect sizes detected using the primary index of Pearson's product moment coefficients (r) and found that some people of color internalized racism and in turn have less than desirable mental health outcomes (i.e., depression, anxiety, and lower self-esteem) (Gale et al., 2020). Conversely, Gupta et al. (2011) argue that internalized racism does not mandate reduced mental and physical health outcomes, especially if those stereotypes and or beliefs are positively balanced. The researchers found greater mental health outcomes for among 291 Asian Americans who sometimes internalized racial stereotypes such as intelligence or strong work ethic which in turn aids in the development of a positive self-concept and large to moderate effect size (Gupta, 2011).

Heterosexism

Heterosexism is not to be confused or used interchangeably with homophobia which implies the non-LGBT member has an irrational fear of those in this minority group (Nadal et al., 2010). David (2013) presents heterosexism as a set of beliefs, attitudes, biases, or discriminatory practices that are not in favor of same sex sexuality. Internalized heterosexism is a culmination of negative attitudes, and beliefs about homosexuality that often-times involuntarily perpetuate heterosexuality dominance. McGeorge and Stone (2011) examine the complexities of heterosexism positing that it must be studied in three distinct dimensions consisting of heteronormative assumptions, institutional heterosexism, and heterosexual privilege.

Heteronormative assumptions are the automatic pre-conceived notions and ideals that uphold the notion of heterosexuality as the normal expression of sexuality, thus rendering those who identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual as invisible by societal standards of sexual attraction. Institutional heterosexism refers to the systems such as health care, mental health, educational systems, and government that idealize the heterosexual lifestyle as superior. Heterosexual privilege which builds on the principle of unmerited civil rights, societal benefits, and advantages granted to individuals contingent on sexual orientation.

Intersectionality

Intersectionality as described by feminist and race theorists is a way of interpreting the repercussions of membership in multiple minority groups (Cole, 2009). Buchanan et al. (2009) contend that if indeed an individual does identify with more than one minority status, he or she may face double jeopardy. Double jeopardy theory provides context in understanding the effects of multi marginalized group membership. As such, individuals in multiple marginalized groups may experience harassment and discrimination more so than someone in a singular minority group but may also take on a different connotation due to the eclectic mix of social and cultural beliefs.

Moradi and Subich (2008) construct four perspectives surrounding the influence of intersecting identities in one individual. These perspectives were derived from a sample of 133 African American women and community women in which an examination of the interactions between racism and sexism were considered. A path analysis yielded no interactive effects, however, 14% of the variance in psychological distress was accounted for by recent racist and sexist events. First, the primary oppression approach postulates that one form of oppression may supersede the presence of others that are of equal importance. Next, the additive approach

assumes that each intersecting minority identity an individual ascribes is relevant and poses

direct effects that combine additively and negatively affect mental health. Third, the

interactionist approach posits that one type of minority identity may interact with and exacerbate

the presence of another minority status identity. Finally, the intersectionality approach posits that

independent elements of oppression and their various points of fusion can negatively impact

psychosocial health. Yuval and Davis (2006) suggest the absence of interactivity and mutual

interdependence is lacking in disability studies where the intersecting identities of people with

disability is seen as isolated and dichotomous and the disabling condition is seen as most

important. In society, disability is viewed from a medical ideology in which the manifestation of

the disabling condition is emphasized without relation to the social components of the individual

with the disability (Cramer & Plummer, 2009).

Internalized Oppression

Although passage of major legislative acts, amendments, and laws have provided more

rights and protections to people in minority groups, the residual effect of oppression is known as

internalized oppression (IO). Internalized oppression is the intertwining of negative attitudes and

views associated with cultural norms based on inferiority. Individuals' devaluation of each other

and self that perpetuates maintains the cycle of oppression and maintains the power structures

(David, 2013). Szymanski et al. (2008) extract five studies that explore the relationship between

internalized heterosexism and psychosocial distress. The researchers report significant positive

relationships suggesting the greater the level of internalized heterosexism, the greater the

psychological stress it poses. The manifestation of internalized oppression presents in different

ways from each minority. For, example Latino/a people internalized oppression on the bases of

heritage in which they blame their heritage for the systematic devaluing of self and sociopolitical

circumstances. Individuals of Asian descent, more specifically Filipinos who often voluntarily socially distance themselves from others in their respective minority group to appear more Americanized thereby adhering to the colonial mentality.

Multiple Internalized Oppressions

Racism, ableism, sexism, and heterosexism are institutions of oppressions that are structured and biased relationships whereby one group prospers at the expense of the other (Adam et al., 2007). The above-mentioned systems of oppression sometimes intertwine to create involuted interactions rather than purely additive (Hankivsky, 2014). Szymanski and Gupta (2009) examine the relationships between internalized and external oppression on the basis of sexual orientation and race on the mental health of 178 Asian Americans in the LGBQ community. As expected racist events ($r = .18$), heterosexist events ($r = .18$), internalized racism ($r = .16$), and internalized heterosexism ($r = .2$), were all positively correlated with psychological distress and each having a small effect size. A regression analysis produced an ($R^2 = .26$), which signifies racist events, heterosexist events, internalized racism, and internalized heterosexism account for 26% of the variance in psychological distress. Finally, when examined simultaneously only racist events and internalized heterosexism were significant predictors of psychological distress. Similarly, in a sample of 143 women who identify as lesbian (92%), bisexual (6%), and unsure (2%), Szymanski (2005) explores multiples internalized oppressions in relation to sexual orientation and gender on mental health. Regression analysis yielded a ($R^2 = .31$), which suggests that internalized heterosexism, recent sexist events, recent sexual orientation hate crime victimization account for 31% of the variance in psychological distress. Additional correlation analyses detected significant relationships between sexual orientation hate crime victimization ($r = .22$) , recent sexist events ($r = .33$), and internalized heterosexism ($r = $

.83) were positively correlated with psychological distress, however, there was no significant relationship detected between internalized sexism and psychological distress. Sexual orientation hate crime victimization and recent sexist event had a small to medium effect size while internalized heterosexism had a large effect size according to the Pearson's r values.

Syndor-Campbell (2017) reviewed the literature surrounding the dual minority status of African American women with disabilities, especially those with physical disabilities do not fit into the societal standard of beauty where beauty is associated with healthiness. The addition of disability couple with a racial minority status promotes a negative representation of character or and intent. African American women with physical disabilities are somehow seen as unworthy of trust and become invisible in the context of sex and sexuality. The invisibility acts as conduit of diminished self-appraisal thereby leaving this particular population at risk to internalize the oppressive ideologies impressed upon them by the majority in terms of race and ability (LaChappelle et al., 2014).

These particular populations are disproportionately affected by poverty sometimes attributed to certain aspects of intersectionality and their respective social group. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the average earnings of a person with a disability was $21, 572 a year while people without disabilities earned on average $31,874 a year (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). Currently more than one in five or 21.2 % people with disabilities in U.S. live in poverty while the national poverty rate for people without disabilities was 13.8% (Disability Compendium, 2016). Additionally, most states in the U.S. have seen the poverty percentage gap widen for those with and without disabilities with a margin between 7.4 and 8.3 percent. More specifically, poverty levels differ depending on race. Approximately 37% of African Americans with a disability live at or below the poverty level, while that number decreases slightly for Hispanics

with disabilities at 29%, Asians 19%, and finally non-Hispanic whites at 14% (Disability Compendium, 2016). One population-based study revealed that people of color who are also LGBT members experience poverty at or 200% below the national poverty rate and those living with HIV are twice as likely to live 200% below the national poverty rate (Fredriksen-Goldsen et al. 2013).

Employment Inequalities

People with Disabilities

Shaw et al. (2012) posit that one of the most fertile grounds for conceptualizing the detrimental effects of membership in multiple minority groups is the workplace. Although protections are in place to protect individuals in minority groups there is no definite legal measure to define discrimination involving the distinct composition of disability in relation to other identities. Each violation is assigned to a particular basis (i.e., race, sex, disability, sexual orientation) and none address the interaction of all identities in one complaint. Between 2007 and 2009, people with disabilities were disproportionately affected by the recession resulting in reduction of their participation in the workforce by (9%), and five times more likely to lose their jobs than persons without disabilities (Kaye, 2019). Although, employment for people without disabilities have started to flourish again following the recession, this increase excluded those with disabilities. Employment rates for non-disabled persons (66.3%) is almost triple that of persons with disabilities (19.3%) in the current economy (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018). As noted earlier, although women with disabilities represent 4% of the U.S. population, they only account for 1.5% of the workforce (Kraus et al., 2018). Rutigliano and O'Connell (2013) investigate workplace culture in terms of employee engagement and found that workers with

disabilities feel discontent in their places of employment due the lack of opportunities for growth and promotion.

Von Schrader et al., (2013) present similar findings from a survey study on the benefits and consequences of disclosing disability status. The sample included 592 persons with disabilities categorized into two disability types labeled less apparent and very apparent. The largest determining factor associated with disclosing disability status was the fear of being fired or not hired in 73% of the total sample. Significant differences based on disability type were detected for consequences such as: losing health benefits (64.8% among those with less apparent disabilities such as psychiatric disabilities compared to 54.9% among those with very apparent disabilities such as wheelchair users), losing promotion opportunities (64.1% vs. 55.7%), lack of supervisor support/understanding (65.8% vs. 49.0%), and being treated differently (63.7% vs. 46.3%).

Women

Women continue to face attitudinal barriers in the workplace, for example only 16.9% of board director positions for fortune 500 companies are women (Catalyst, 2013). Harrison et al. (2006) conducted a meta-analysis and extracted the two most influential factors associated with negative attitudes towards equal employment policies which are racism and sexism. Moreover, a strong negative relationship exists between sexism and positive attitudes towards equal employment policies. Hideg and Ferris (2016) introduce two additional facets of sexism native to the workplace taking on two forms as either hostile or benevolent. Hostile sexism is described as ideologies held by men that women are inferior and use sex as a mechanism to control men. In contrast, benevolent sexism although still an oppressive construct the expression is situated in positive attitudes towards women while simultaneously labeling women as the weaker sex, that

need the protection and support of a man (Becker, 2010; Glick & Fiske, 1996; Hideg & Ferris, 2016). Investigators consider the positive and negative influences of benevolent sexism on the support of equal employment policies for women in the workplace. The researchers analyzed the positive and negative effects of benevolent sexism on equal employment policies across four studies, three based in Canada and one in the U.S. The fourth study compiled a sample from the U.S. in which a total of 713 participants that included men (n =378) and women (n= 335) participated which granted researchers with 72% statistical power needed to detect a large effect size. Differences were detected in the type of sexism perpetuated by men and women. Men tended to endorse more hostile sexism beliefs more so than women (M=3.49, SD = 1.27; M = 2.94, SD=1.37). Attitudes towards equal employment for women were more favorable in women than men. Men who scored higher on the benevolent sexism assessment showed more positive attitudes toward equal employment policies that endorsed hiring women, as long as the position was a feminine presenting job such as a human resources manager rather than financial manager of a large company. However, women held equal attitudes about hiring women regardless of job type (Hideg & Ferris, 2016).

People of Color

In a review of the literature, McDonald and Day (2010) found that over the past five decades, desegregation in the workplace has been beneficial for minorities and women, however with overt discriminatory practices on the decrease, new forms of discrimination and prejudice are arising such as preferential hiring of non-American born blacks over blacks born in the U.S. Racial inequalities in the workplace are amplified by contemporary discrimination in the hiring process that contributes to underrepresentation (Pager et al., 2009). The federal government created the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC) to implement legislation that

makes it unlawful to discriminate against job seekers and employees on the basis of "race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, transgender status, and sexual orientation), national origin, age (40 or older), disability or genetic information" (U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity, n.d.). Between 1980 and 2018, the U.S. population grew from 225 million to 425 million. However, funding for agencies such as the EEOC received less and less as years went on. Although the U.S. population grew by 200 million people funding for the EEOC decreased from 412.1 million to 379.5 million dollars over the course of 38 years, thereby reducing funding on average 1.2 million dollars per year (Solomon et al., 2019). Subsequently, although these laws were established annual reductions in funding and exemptions provided for companies with 15 or less employees discrimination continued with little to no consequence (American Federation of Government Employees, 2019). Therefore, millions of minority workers continue to experience discrimination in earnings and employment (NPR Robert Wood Johnson Foundation & Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, 2018). Furthermore, understaffing the EEOC is a contributing factor in the enforcement of these laws with a significant decrease in EEOC employees between 1980 (3,390) and 2018 (1,968) (Solomon et al., 2018), resulting in a backlog of nearly 50,000 cases (U.S. Employment Opportunity Commission, 2019).

Moreover, researchers evaluated the impact of accent on the hiring process in a sample of 203 participants recruited from a northern California university. The sample included 117 females and 85 males with a majority of the sample being of Asian descent (34%), white (26%), Spanish (21%,) middle eastern (7%), African American (6%), Native American (1%), and mixed race (4%). The researchers pose two applicants for the position of software engineer and use voice manipulation software to portray one applicant as having a traditional Mexican/Spanish accent and the other applicant to have a standard American accent. Applicant accent had an

effect on job suitability ratings and on the likeliness of being promoted. More importantly, the Mexican/Spanish accented applicant was rated less suitable for the software job in comparison to the standard American English accent. The Mexican/Spanish accented applicant was also perceived as less likely to be promoted. A correlation analyses revealed strong correlations between applicant accent and job suitability, perceived competence, and likelihood for promotion. Other strong correlations were revealed between likelihood of promotion and hiring decisions, perceived competence, perceived warmth, and job suitability. Lastly, all correlation values ranged between .21 and .56 yielding a small to medium effect size (Hosoda et al., 2012).

Minorities experience deficits in the labor force at every level even federally where some minorities more than others lack representation. Kohli et al. (2012) released a report that provides context to a lack of diversity in the nation's largest employer (federal government). The federal government employs roughly 2.8 million people but faulters in terms of diversity at the senior executive level. Projections for the year 2030 put minorities at a disadvantage for representation at this level such as: (Hispanics accounting for only 6.8% of positions at the senior executive level although they represent 23% of the civilian workforce), Asian Americans (6% vs. 7%), and Pacific Islanders (1.6% vs. 3.7%). Contrary, to other minority groups, African Americans are projected to hold 14.8% of senior executive service positions which accurately depicts their share of the workforce.

Persons who are LGBT

Whilst legislation such as the Equality Act (2015) granted LGBT persons more protections under the law, they still experience exclusion and discrimination at a higher rate than their non-LGBT peers. On average 15.5% of LGBT persons with a disability report removing items such as affiliations or organizational participation that indicate sexual orientation for fear

of discrimination (Mirza et al., 2018). At least one in five LGBT people experience

discrimination based on their sexual orientation or sexual identity when applying for

employment (20%) or applying for a promotion (22%). The presence of an additional minority

status identity (i.e.,, race) increases the likelihood of experiencing discrimination in the

workplace. Approximately, one third of LGBT people (34%) of color experience discrimination

in the hiring process compared to only 12% of their white LGBT counterparts, distancing them

from the labor force and continually widening the wage gap. Geographic location is a factor

isolated to the employability of persons identifying as LGBT. Eighty-one percent of those living

in the south perceiving little no employment opportunities for due to sexual orientation (NPR

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, 2017).

Previous studies show that gay men in the U.S. earn 12 -16% less than their heterosexual

counterparts whereas lesbian women earn the same or more as their heterosexual counterparts

(Klawitter, 2015). A review of the literature highlights instances where fear is a determinant in

job seeking and attainment for sexual minority groups. Continual exclusion, isolation, and

oppression may lead those in multiple marginalized groups to internalize societal discrimination

and perceive themselves to be less qualified in obtaining a job, being promoted, and eventually

supervising others (Nelson & Probst, 2010).

Collective self esteem

David (2013) considers self-esteem at the personal and collective level. The way an

individual evaluates the positive and negative traits of self refers to personal self-esteem while

collective self-esteem asserts that we attach value to the social groups to which we belong. The

lived experiences of those in multiple minority groups may lead to internalized oppression which

may negatively impact overall collective self-esteem. Collective self-esteem encompasses three

distinct areas (i.e., membership esteem, private esteem, and public esteem) identity that describe the nature in which one values his or herself in relation social group membership (Crocker et al., 1994; David, 2013; Luhtanen, 1992). For example, David (2008) studied the relationships between colonial mentality personal and collective self-esteem. As mentioned earlier, colonial mentality otherwise known as internalized colonialism pertains to the way an individual views his or her cultural identity in reference to the majority and is composed of two components (i.e., internalized cultural inferiority and cultural shame/embarrassment).

In a sample of 248 Filipino Americans significantly negative relationships between the four collective self-esteem constructs and two constructs of colonial mentality were detected with a small effect size to medium effect size according to Pearson's r values. Internalized cultural and ethnic inferiority were negatively correlated with all four aspects of collective self-esteem such that membership ($r = -.29$), private collective esteem ($r = -.53$), public self-esteem ($r = -.36$), and identity ($r = -.14$). Similarly, cultural shame and embarrassment were both negatively correlated with each aspect of collective self-esteem ($r = -.39$, $-.59$, $-.30$, and $-.30$) respectively. Often- times rejection of personal cultural identity (i.e., heritage, cultural traditions) and uncontested preference for anything widely accepted by the majority and is associated with diminished collective self-esteem (David & Okazaki, 2010). Owuamalam and Zagefka (2014) explored the effects of how one's perception of how others view their respective social group (metastereotyping) on employability beliefs in a sample of 80 women. State self-esteem is described as momentary fluctuations in self-esteem (Heatherton & Polivy, 1991) and was negatively correlated with metastereotyping ($r=-.40$) medium effect size. As hypothesized overall higher self-esteem was positively correlated with higher perceived employability ($r=.31$) small effect size. Gordijn and Boven (2009) suggest that internalizing negative stereotypes

undercuts one's self concept. Therefore, it is within reason that a negative self-evaluation may not be beneficial to self-perceived employability (Ellis & Taylor, 1983).

Self-perceived Employability

Rothwell et al. (2008) conceptualize self-perceived employability as a psychosocial construct that is wholistic in nature and is informed by social experiences. Self-perceived employability is the perception one holds about their ability to acquire and maintain a job (Rothwell & Arnold, 2007). Williams et al. (2016) conducted a review of the literature governing employability and advise that a full understanding of employability requires one to explore the construct from three separate but equally important perspectives. First, capital which is loosely defined as any trait or characteristic of an individual that provides a basis for him or her to increase the possibility of accruing economic value or other personal attributes related to work. Capital not only refers to economic value, but also includes the accumulation of psychological, cultural, social, and human capital (Bourdieu, 2008). As cited earlier, societal, and architectural barriers often limit the capacity for those with disabilities to accrue capital socially, physically, and economically. Career management is the second perspective which refers to a person's ability to navigate the external and internal labor markets to their benefit. This is an essential factor in measuring self-perceived employability due to the changing demand of the internal and external labor markets whereby, people in marginalized groups must situate themselves in both markets as employable. Finally, contextual components consist of the factors associated with making capital negotiations and accumulation such as age, health status, personal needs, and career identity (De Grip et al., 2004). Therefore, self-perceived employability needs to be examined while considering the wholeness of the individual and their perceived capacity to incur, manage and convert capital whether economically, culturally, or socially.

In summary, much of the literature surrounding intersectionality and in particular including with disabilities does not include specifics about the complex interactions between multiple marginalized identities (Cole, 2009). However, internalized oppressions such as ableism, racism, sexism, and heterosexism are not one-dimensional constructs and have historically exerted some influence on self-perception and should be considered in particular for those with disabilities (Bogart, 2014).

The main focus of this chapter was to highlight important gaps within the literature concerning those in socially disadvantaged groups historically and or present day. The major categories included are racial minorities, women, people with disabilities, and sexual minorities all of which in the last 60 years have benefited from major legislative victories at state and federal levels. Although, policies and practices have been put in place, some minority groups experience deficits in employment, earnings, promotional potential, healthcare, and housing barriers at a disproportionate rate. The most important factor highlighted in this chapter is the need to specifically focus on those with disabilities and their con-membership in other minority groups and its influence on self-perceived employability to expand the knowledge base of professionals who work with these particular populations.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This section will provide the specifics on how the current study was procedurally developed and carried out. Criteria for participant selection is discussed followed by a comprehensive description of the procedures used in this study. In addition to aforementioned components, instrumentation as well as their psychometric properties are addressed. Finally, this section will outline the rationalization and identification of the independent and dependent variables for inclusion and the research design.

This section serves as a reminder of the research questions and hypotheses to be explored in this study.

1. Do multiple internalized oppressions (i.e., internalized feelings due to bias and stereotypes associated with membership in multiple social groups such as being a woman (sexism), being lesbian or gay (heterosexism), being a person with a disability (ableism) or of the African American race (racism), influence self-perceived employability?

   H_0 1: There is no relationship between multiple minority status identities and self-perceived employability.

   H_a 1: There is a relationship between multiple minority status identities and self-perceived employability.

2. Is there a relationship between collective self-esteem and membership in multiple minority groups?

H₀ 2: There is no relationship between collective self-esteem membership in multiple

minority groups.

Hₐ 2: There is a relationship between collective self-esteem membership in multiple minority groups.

3. What characteristics (gender, disability type, sexual orientation, race, or age) predict self-

   perceived employability?

   H₀3: Gender, race, sexual orientation, or age, independently or in combination, do not predict

   self-perceived employability.

   Hₐ3: Gender, race, sexual orientation, or age, independently or in combination, do predict

   self-perceived employability.

4. Does a certain disability type (i.e., sensory, mental, or physical) predict self-perceived

   employability?

   H₀ 4: Different disability types, independently or in combination, do not predict self-

   perceived employability.

   Hₐ 4: Different disability types, independently or in combination, do predict self-perceived

   employability.

5. Is there a relationship between level of education and self-perceived employability?

   H₀ 5: There is no relationship between level of education and self-perceived employability?

   Hₐ 5: There is a relationship between level of education and self-perceived employability?

6. Is there a relationship between years of work experience and self-perceived employability?

   H₀ 6: There is no relationship between years of work experience and self-perceived

   employability.

H_a 6: There is a relationship between years of work experience and self-perceived

employability. *All hypotheses will be tested at the .05 alpha level

7. Is there a relationship between employment status (employed or not employed) and self-

perceived employability?

H₀7: There is no relationship between employment status and self-perceived employability.

Hₐ7: There is a relationship between employment status and self-perceived employability.

Participants

A convenience sample was recruited using various social media platforms (Facebook,

Instagram, and Snapchat). Criteria for inclusion in the current study include participants

identifying with one or more of the following minority status identities (i.e., racial minority,

person with a disability, member of the LGBT community, or being female). The recommended

sample size for logistic regression is fifty participants per independent variable, however for

smaller studies such as the current one, a smaller sample size with 20 participants per

independent variable is sufficient when evaluating which variables that aren't highly related

(Bujang et al., 2018). The final sample consisted of men and women aged 18 years or older with

a disability (n=154).

Procedure

After obtaining approval from the Internal Review Board (IRB) from the University of

Texas Rio Grande Valley, a convenience sampling method was used to recruit 154 participants

aged 18 and over with disabilities. The researcher used a digital flyer to recruit participants. The

flyer was posted on social media platforms such as Instagram, Snapchat and Facebook.

Additionally, the flyer was posted by social media influencers with disabilities as well as the

researcher's personal social media accounts. The informed consent was embedded in the survey

and participants completion of the survey will serve as acknowledgement of informed consent. Recruitment through social media platforms gave the researcher access to a variety of individuals with disabilities and reached a broader audience geographically. Participants were able to scan a QR code or copy and paste the Qualtrics link directly into the web browser and he or she will be directed to the survey. Before a participant could begin the survey they were required to acknowledge the informed consent. The informed consent included a brief description of the study, risks, benefits, and eligibility requirements.

After successful completion of the demographic and research questionnaire, each participant was given the opportunity to submit an email address for the raffle via link at the end of the survey. The winner of the raffle was contacted via email and sent a digital Target gift card to be used at their convenience. The current study was a non-experimental survey-based study with 154 participants with disabilities recruited for analyses. Surveys were administered via Qualtrics as well as informed consent along with incentive raffle information. After successful completion of data collection, results were transferred from Qualtrics to IBM SPSS Version 27. Participants' responses were saved to an encrypted USB drive and placed in a locked filing cabinet at the researcher's discretion.

Instrumentation

Appropriated racial oppression (AROS). Campon and Roberts (2015) developed a 24-item scale to access the beliefs, attitudes, and emotional responses of people of color. Questions are presented in the following format, "because of my race I feel useless." Items are assessed on a 7-point ordinal Likert scale with 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The AROS consists of four subscales including emotional responses (α = .83), American standards of beauty (α = .85), devaluation of own racial group (α = .86), and patterns of thinking that maintain the

status quo (α = .70). An item pool of (n = 309) was derived from five dimensions including appropriation of negative stereotypes, patterns of thinking that maintain the status quo, white standards of beauty, devaluation of one's own racial group, and emotional reactions. First, appropriation of negative stereotypes was based on the work of Taylor et al., (1972) and their contribution of the Nadanolitization Scale (NAD) for blacks. They suggest, those experiencing racism over the course of a lifetime are socialized to accept the superiority of whites and inferiority of their own race through covert and overt messages perpetuated generationally, societally, through media, and friends. Next, patterns of thinking that maintain the status quo was based on the idea that individuals who experience appropriated racial oppression adopt the notion that discrimination and/or the repercussions of it do not exist, therefore internalizing and promoting whiteness as superior (Bailey et al. 2011). Several scholars examining white American cultural standards acceptance found that blacks, Asians, and Latinos consciously and unconsciously take on white culture including beauty standards leading to disparagement of their respective cultural standards to gain acceptance (Bailey et al., 2011; Hipolito-Delgado, 2010).

Prior to the development of the AROS, there was no measure specifically designed to assess the appropriated racial oppression across all minority groups. Only four scales were available each pertaining to a specific race and their experiences rather than a general scale that is inclusive and can be used for all people of color. An initial item pool of 309 was reduced during initial review by researchers. Next, two separate panels of experts representing four minority groups (i.e., Asian, African American, Latinos and Native American) conducted a review for construct appropriateness and validity. If any of two experts selected the same item for removal, it was discarded. An exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted to measure whether or not the remaining items would accurately measure appropriated racial oppression.

The EFA was repeated until no factors overlapped, resulting in a four-factor solution with 32 items. Finally, confirmatory factor analysis by way of structural equation modeling (SEM) was used to validate the results of the EFA. The SEM consisted of two components including the measurement model (directly measured variables) and the theoretical model (measured indirect/latent variables). However, model fit was not achieved in the first CFA, thus modifications were made based on recommendations by Kline (2005) and Schumacker and Lomax (2004) and eight items were deleted, resulting in a 24-item scale.

Self-perceived Employability scale (SPES). Rothwell and Arnold (2007) developed the self-perceived employability scale to access an individual's belief about their employment options. The SPES is an 11-item self-report measure created on the premise of a framework introduced by Hillage and Pollard (1998) categorizing employability into two distinct domains known as internal and external labor markets. For example, the internal labor market is suggestive of the value one assumes their current organization places on them, whereas external labor markets of employability are reflective of an individual's perception of the labor market's valuation of people with their particular occupational experiences. Responses are recorded based on a five-point Likert scale with 1 = totally disagree to 5 = totally agree. Sample items from the internal and external labor market subscales are as follows: "Even if they were downsizing in this organization I am confident that I would be retained;" and "I can get any job, anywhere, so long as my skills and experience were reasonably relevant" (Rothwell & Arnold, 2007).

The researchers employed thorough measures to assess the validity and reliability of the SPES. First, two other constructs (i.e., subjective career success and professional commitment) were selected that are similar to employability to provide a good test of discriminant validity. Subjective career success includes self-perception as well as the individual's position in the labor

market which is similar to employability. Professional commitment is the extent to which an individual feels a connection or devotion to his or her profession in which researchers expect a high correlation with self-employability. Next, 16 items were constructed to form the self-perceived employability scale. A principal component analysis (PCA) as suggested by Pallant (2001) was used to identify the distinction between self-perceived employability vs subjective career success and professional commitment. A Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin analysis was done to determine sampling adequacy and yielded a value of .86, which is well above the recommended .60 value. Investigators used a Bartlett's test of sphericity which was significant at $p<0.001$. A three-factor solution using Varimax was set forth to include subjective career success (factor 1), self-perceived employability (factor 2), and professional commitment (factor 3) with each one accounting for 16.7, 16.2, and 11.7 percent of the total variance respectively. Results indicated a substantial number of instances where the correlation coefficient was .03 and above. Specifically, modest overlap was revealed between components 1 and 2 with 5 of the 16 items having loadings of .30 or higher on both. Of the 16 items, only 11 loaded on component 2 and ranged between 0.49 to 0.74. In terms of the SPES, four items remained that access internal employability and seven meant to assess external employability. Both internal and external employability are deemed reliable with each carrying a Cronbach's alpha of $\alpha =.72$, and $\alpha =.79$ respectively, in addition to an overall reliability of $\alpha = .83$ for the entire 11 item SPES (Arnold & Rothwell, 2007).

Collective Self-esteem Scale. Luhtanen and Crocker (1992) developed a 16-item scale to measure an individual's level of social identity in connection with their membership in a particular social group (i.e.,, gender, race, religion, ethnicity, and socioeconomic class). The scale was created in alignment with Rosenburg's (1965) assessment of personal self-esteem.

Scale construction included four types of items (e.g., membership esteem, private collective self-esteem, public collective self-esteem, and identity). All four item types were drawn from previous works of Breckler and Greenwald (1986) and Breckler et al. (1986) and their contributions to public, private, and collective self-evaluation. Membership esteem is reflective of how good or worthy one feels in relation to their membership in specific social groups (e.g., I am a worthy member of the social groups I belong to) based on Brecker et al. (1986) collective ego task items. The remaining three areas drew support from the social identity theory (Breckler & Greenwald, 1986; Hogg, 2016) contending that self-concept and perceived other evaluations of one's social group that contribute to collective identity. Private collective self-esteem is indicative of one's personal judgements of his or her social group (i.e.,, I feel good about the social groups I belong to). Public collective self-esteem is representative of how an individual assesses the judgement of others about his or her respective social group. Finally, the identity items assess the importance of one's membership in their respective social groups (Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992)

Luhtanen and Roberts (1992) posed 10 items from each above-mentioned area with three additional items addressing the importance of being a good group member. Next, the 43-item measure is subjected to a CFA alongside the Rosenburg's Self-esteem scale, with the results indicating 55.2% of the variance was attributed to the four factors measured by the scale. After, considerations of shortening the scale, investigators extracted 4 items from each area with the highest loading on the appropriate factor resulting in a 16-item measure. The final 16 items underwent a principal components analysis that showed 72.3% of the variance was accounted for by all four factors with all the items loading on the appropriate factor. Researchers continued reliability analysis in three studies rendering coefficient alphas ranging between .73 to .76 for

membership, collective private self-esteem .77 to .82, collective public self-esteem .78 to .80, and identity .74 to .86. Item total subscale correlations values were between .51 to .80, and $\alpha =$ .85 for the entire scale, thus making the CSES a reliable and valid measure.

Variable Selection and Data Analysis

In this study there is one dependent variable (DV) identified as self-perceived employability which is classified as ordinal data. The dependent variable scores from the self-perceived employability assessment will be transformed into mean scores to represent continuous data for analysis. In addition there are eight predictor variables (IV) which include race: African American, White, Asian, Native American, Pacific Islander, Hispanic, and Biracial (categorical), gender: male and female (dichotomous), sexual orientation: lesbian, gay, or bisexual (categorical), disability: sensory, mental, or physical (categorical), years of experience (ratio), employment status: employed or unemployed (dichotomous), level of education (high school, associates, undergraduate degree, and graduate degree) ordinal, and collective self-esteem: high or low (dichotomous) consisting of nominal and ordinal data. Each scale used in this study will undergo the proper psychometric property testing for reliability and validity. Analyses for this study will be conducted using the IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 27.

Prior to running the statistical analyses, the following general assumptions for binary logistic regression were evaluated and addressed: (a) the outcome variable is dichotomous (b) independence of observations, (c) linearity between independent variables (i.e., the AROS scale scores and the (CSE) scale scores) that were recorded as mean scores and transformed into binary data (high/low) for analysis. Finally, no extreme outliers were detected in the continuous predictor variables that could influence the results. Linearity of the data was assessed using a

Pearson's *r* correlation which yielded small positive correlation (*r* =.*363*). Since Pearson's

correlation coefficient (*r* =.*363*) is less than 0.8, collinearity does not exist between the AROS

mean scores and the CSE mean scores (Berry & Feldman, 1985; Vatcheva, 2016; Kim, 2019).

Descriptive analysis was conducted to assess the demographic variables (i.e.,, race, gender,

disability, and sexual orientation). A binary logistic regression analyses will be conducted to

determine if a relationship exist between multiple minority status identities and self-perceived

employability, multiple internalized oppressions and collective self-esteem and finally whether

or not a relationship exist between gender, disability type, sexual orientation, race, or age and

self-perceived employability. Next, a Phi correlation coefficient analysis was used to measure

the strength of the relationship between the following demographic variables and self-perceived

employability; (a) disability type, (b) employment status, (c) level of education, and (d) years of

experience. Marginalized identities included identifying as a female, having a disability, or

identifying as gay, lesbian, or bisexual, or as a racial minority such as Asian, African American,

Latino, Native American or biracial. Internalized oppressions in relation to self-perceived

employability was defined by scores on the following scales and subscales, SPES, CSES,

AROS.

Summary

The previous discussion included a brief review of the problem, research questions, and

corresponding hypotheses. Participant selection, relevant demographics and procedures for the

study were outlined and defined. Instruments were described with accompanying validity and

reliability figures to provide support for use in the current study. Finally, independent, and

dependent variables were discussed and defined as well as statistical procedures used to answer

each research que

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The following section will consist of the analysis of data collected for this study as well as sample composition. The findings gathered from demographic data, and the inferential statistical analyses are presented in response to the research questions and corresponding hypotheses outlined in chapters one and three. As a reminder, the intent of this study was to evaluate the relationship between multiple marginalized social identities such as gender, race, and sexual orientation in people with disabilities and self-perceived employability. For clarification, internalized oppressions are derived from membership in multiple marginalized groups/social identities (David, 2013). Additional contributing factors also evaluated included: (a) collective self-esteem, (a) disability type, (c) level of education, and (d) years of experience. People without disabilities were not included as a reference group because of the gap within disability studies that suggests a person's ability status (disabled) supersedes the presence and interactions of other social identities such as the ones listed above (Goethals et al. 2015). A quantitative non-experimental survey-based design was used for this study. A binary logistic regression analysis was performed to address research questions one through three and questions four through seven were addressed using the Phi correlation coefficient, in addition to a Pearson's correlation analysis to address the strength of the relationships between the mean scores from the Appropriated Racial Oppression scale (AROS) and the Collective Self-esteem scale (CSE). The study included the Self-Perceived Employability scale as the dependent

variable in addition to gender, age, sexual orientation, disability type, race, employment status, level of education, and scores from the AROS and CSE scales as the independent variables. Demographic data were transformed into binary data or dichotomous values such as (0, 1) for analysis, while the AROS and CSE scales were assessed as mean scores and transformed into a dichotomous high/low value based on a seven-point Likert scale; with seven being the highest and one being the lowest. The dependent variable was also assessed as a mean score value and transformed into a dichotomous high/low value based on a five-point Likert scale with five being the highest and one being the lowest. As a reminder, the research questions and hypotheses examined were as follows:

1. Do multiple internalized oppressions (i.e., internalized feelings due to bias and stereotypes associated with membership in multiple social groups such as being a woman (sexism), being lesbian or gay (heterosexism), being a person with a disability (ableism) or of the African American race (racism), influence self-perceived employability?

   H_0 1: There is no relationship between multiple minority status identities and self-perceived employability.

   H_a 1: There is a relationship between multiple minority status identities and self-perceived employability.

2. Is there a relationship between collective self-esteem and membership in multiple minority groups?

   H_0 2: There is no relationship between collective self-esteem membership in multiple minority groups.

   H_a 2: There is a relationship between collective self-esteem membership in multiple minority groups.

3. What characteristics (gender, disability type, sexual orientation, race, or age) predict self-perceived employability?

   H$_0$3: Gender, race, sexual orientation, or age, independently or in combination, do not predict self-perceived employability.

   H$_a$3: Gender, race, sexual orientation, or age, independently or in combination, do predict self-perceived employability.

4. Does a certain disability type (i.e., sensory, mental, or physical) predict self-perceived employability?

   H$_0$ 4: Different disability types, independently or in combination, do not predict self-perceived employability.

   H$_a$ 4: Different disability types, independently or in combination, do predict self-perceived employability.

5. Is there a relationship between level of education and self-perceived employability?

   H$_0$ 5: There is no relationship between level of education and self-perceived employability?

   H$_a$ 5: There is a relationship between level of education and self-perceived employability?

6. Is there a relationship between years of work experience and self-perceived employability?

   H$_0$ 6: There is no relationship between years of work experience and self-perceived employability.

   H$_a$ 6: There is a relationship between years of work experience and self-perceived employability. *All hypotheses will be tested at the .05 alpha level

7. Is there a relationship between employment status (employed or not employed) and self-perceived employability?

H₀7: There is no relationship between employment status and self-perceived employability.

Hₐ7: There is a relationship between employment status and self-perceived employability.

Sample composition and demographics

After IRB approval was granted from the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, participants were recruited for a period of eight weeks through various social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat. Digital flyers were posted in disability support groups/online forums, sent to, and reposted by social media influencers with disabilities and Paralympians. A total of 240 responses were received after the two-month period. After discarding incomplete surveys, the total sample size was reduced to 154 participants for analysis. The recommended sample size for logistic regression is fifty participants per independent variable, however for smaller studies such as the current one, a smaller sample size with 20 participants per independent variable is sufficient when evaluating which variables are highly related (Bujang et al., 2018). The final sample consisted of men and women aged 18 years or older with a disability. Women represented 68.2% of the sample while men accounted for the remaining 31.8%. In terms of race, the sample was composed of African Americans (24.7%), Whites (43.5%), Asian Americans (9.7%), Pacific Islanders (.6%), Hispanics (11%), Native Americans (1.3%), and Biracial individuals (9.1%). Disability type was categorized into three categories which included sensory, mental, and physical, with the following percentage breakdowns respectively, 18.8%, 40.3%, and 40.9%. Participants were also asked to select a sexual orientation, which included the following options: (a) gay, (b) lesbian, (c) bisexual, and (d) heterosexual. The majority of the sample self-identified as heterosexual (47.4%), gay (12.3%), lesbian (16.9%), and bisexual (23.4%). Participants were asked to select the respective age range that included his or her age. The age categories included 18-25, 26-40, 41-55, and 56+

years of age. For the purposes of this study, age was transformed into two binary groups labeled young adult (up to 40 years old) and older adults (41 years of age and older) according to Erickson's (1959) analysis and interpretation of the life cycle and identity. The majority of the sample fell between 26-40 years of age (46.1%), 41-55 years of age (21.4%), 18-25 years of age (19.5%), and 56+ years of age (13.0%). Additional demographic data recorded included: (a) employment status, (b) years of work experience, (c) level of education, and (d) satisfaction with employment history (EH).

Table 2

Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Variable	Frequency	%
Gender		
Male	49	31.8%
Female	105	68.2%
Race		
African American	38	24.7%
White	67	43.5%
Asian American	15	9.7%
Pacific Islander	1	.6%
Hispanic	17	11.0%
Native American	2	1.3%
Biracial	14	9.1%
Age		
18-25 YOA	30	19.5%
26-40 YOA	71	46.1%
41-55 YOA	33	21.4%
56+ YOA	20	13.0%
Level of Education		
Less than High School	1	.6%
High School	12	7.8%
Some college	27	17.5%
2-year degree	16	10.4%
4- year degree	42	27.3%
Professional degree	46	29.9%
Doctorate	10	6.5%
Years of Work Experience		
Never worked	6	3.9%
1-5 years	51	33.1%

Table 2, continued.

6-10 years	27	17.5%
11-15 years	34	22.1%
16+ years	36	23.4%
Sexual Orientation		
Gay	19	12.3%
Lesbian	26	16.9%
Bisexual	36	23.4%
Heterosexual	73	47.4%
Disability Type		
Sensory	29	18.8%
Mental	62	40.3%
Physical	63	40.9%
Satisfaction with EH		
Yes	70	45.5%
No	84	54.5%
Employment Status		
Employed	111	72.7%
Not Employed	43	27.3%

Note. YOA= Years of Age; EH = Employment History

Assumptions

Prior to running the statistical analyses, the following general assumptions for logistic regression were evaluated and addressed: (a) the outcome variable is dichotomous (b) independence of observations, (c) linearity between independent variables (i.e., the AROS scale scores and the (CSE) scale scores) that were recorded as mean scores and transformed into binary data (high/low) for analysis. Finally, no extreme outliers were detected in the continuous predictor variables that could influence the results. Linearity of the data was assessed using a Pearson's *r* correlation which yielded small positive correlation (*r =.363)*. Since Pearson's correlation coefficient (*r =.363)* is less than 0.8, collinearity does not exist between the AROS mean scores and the CSE mean scores (Berry & Feldman, 1985; Vatcheva, 2016; Kim, 2019).

Table 3

Correlations

Relationship between the AROS and CSE Scales

	AROS	CSE
AROS		
CSE	.363**	

***Correlation is significant at the .001 level (2 tailed)*

Inferential Statistics

This next section consists of data analyses for the research questions presented in chapters one, three, and at the beginning of chapter four. The analyses and interpretation of the findings will follow the order in which they are presented in this manuscript. Research questions one through four were addressed using binary logistic regression while questions five, six, and seven were addressed using the Phi coefficient.

1. Do multiple internalized oppressions (i.e., internalized feelings due to bias and stereotypes associated with membership in multiple social groups such as being a woman (sexism), being lesbian or gay (heterosexism), being a person with a disability (ableism) or of the African American race (racism), influence self-perceived employability?

   H$_0$ 1: There is no relationship between multiple minority status identities and self-perceived employability.

   H$_a$ 1: There is a relationship between multiple minority status identities and self-perceived employability.

The binary logistic regression yielded a $p = .002$ from the Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients which indicates a good fit of the data to the model according to the literature (Atik et al., 2021; Nancekivell et al., 2021; Steinbach & Stoeber, 2018).

Table 4

Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients

		Chi-square	df	Sig.
Step 1	Model	12.76	2	.002

Next, the model summary table provides three values which include a -2 Log Likelihood value, Cox and Snell R^2, and Nagelkerke R^2 value that serves as a pseudo *r*- value which is interpreted as the amount of variance in the dependent variable attributed to the independent variables (Nagelkerke, 1991). The binary logistic results rendered a Nagelkerke R^2 value of .114 which indicates that 11.4% of the variance in self-perceived employability is accounted for by the predictor variables AROS and CSE. According to Bereket et al. (2016) and Milosavljevic et al. (2015), the Nagelkerke R^2 is most commonly reported, because its values fall in a range between zero and one (Nagelkerke, 1991).

Table 5

Model Summary Table

Step	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R^2	Nagelkerke R^2
1	171.511	.079	.114

The Hosmer and Lemeshow Test is a goodness of fit test that evaluates the fit of the data to the model. In contrast to the Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients which labels a significance level less than or equal to 0.05 as indicating good fit of the data to the model, the Hosmer and Lemeshow *p*-values are interpreted differently. The results of this particular goodness of fit test yielded a $p = .480$ which is greater than the $p = .05$ and indicates a good fit of the data to the model (Hosmer & Lemeshow, 1980).

Table 6

Hosmer and Lemeshow Test

Step	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
1	7.54	8	.480

The binary logistic regression analyses also produced a classification accuracy percentage, which suggests to what degree was the model correctly predicted considering the independent variables. For this particular research question, 74.7% of self-perceived employability was correctly predicted using the AROS and CSE scores.

Table 7

Classification Table

	Observed		SPE Levels Low	High	Percentage Correct
Step 1	SPE Levels	Low	106	4	96.4
		High	35	9	20.5
	Overall Percentage				74.7

Finally, the variables in the equation specify which independent variables (AROS or CSE) were significant in predicting the model. The AROS was found to be significant $p = .001$ and an ($OR = .601$). The odds ratio suggests that as scores on the AROS scale increased, the odds of earning a high score on the SPE decreased (Collett, 1991). The null hypothesis for research question one is rejected. There is a relationship between multiple minority status identities and self-perceived employability.

Table 8

Variables in the Equation

		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1	AROS Means	-.509	.149	11.759	1	.001	.601

Table 8, continued.

CSE Means	.327	.297	1.213	1	.271	1.387
Constant	.631	1.156	.298	1	.585	.532

2. Is there a relationship between collective self-esteem and membership in multiple

minority groups?

H₀ 2: There is no relationship between collective self-esteem and membership in

multiple minority groups.

Hₐ 2: There is a relationship between collective self-esteem and membership in

multiple minority groups.

Research question number two addressed the relationship between collective self-esteem

and gender, race, sexual orientation, and disability type. The Omnibus Tests of Model

Coefficients revealed a $p = .856$, which indicates the data does not fit the model well.

Table 9
Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients

		Chi-square	df	Sig.
Step 1	Model	1.331	4	.856

The model summary provided a Nagelkerke R^2 value of .023 which suggests that only

2.3% of the variance in CSE is accounted for by the predictor variables entered into the model.

However, the Hosmer and Lemeshow Test yielded *a p* = .086 which suggests that the data is a

good fit to the model.

Table 10
Model Summary Table

Step	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R^2	Nagelkerke R^2
1	72.692	.009	.023

Table 11

Hosmer and Lemeshow Test

Step	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
1	13.85	8	.086

The overall classification accuracy was derived from the binary logistic regression which suggests the model was correctly predicted at 93.5%. Although the data appeared to be a good fit to the model when considering the Hosmer and Lemeshow results, none of the predictor variables (i.e., gender, race, sexual orientation, and disability type) were found to be statistically significant as reported the variables in the equation (Table 11) portion of the binary logistic regression analysis. Therefore, in response to research question two, the results indicate that none of the independent variables significantly contribute to predicting CSE levels. The null hypothesis is supported, there is no relationship between collective self-esteem and membership multiple minority groups.

Table 12
Variables in Equation

		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1	What is your gender?	.310	.677	.209	1	.647	1.363
	Which race best describes you?	.387	.679	.325	1	.568	1.473
	What is your sexual orientation?	-.357	.695	.264	1	.607	.700
	What is your disability type?	-.500	.721	.482	1	.487	.606
	Constant	-2.620	.609	18.489	1	.000	.073

3. What characteristics (gender, disability type, sexual orientation, race, or age) predict self-perceived employability?

H_03: Gender, race, sexual orientation, or age, independently or in combination, do not predict self-perceived employability.

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Hₐ3: Gender, race, sexual orientation, or age, independently or in

combination, do predict self-perceived employability.

In response to research question three, another binary logistic regression was completed

and rendered an Omnibus Test of Model Coefficients $p = .000$ reported in Table 12 which

signifies that the data do not fit the data. The model summary provided a Nagelkerke R^2 value of

.206 and is interpreted as 20.6% of the variance in SPE is accounted for by the predictor

variables (gender, sexual orientation, race, and age) as presented in Table 13. Additionally, the

Hosmer and Lemeshow test of good fit is reported in Table 14 revealed a $p = .377$ suggesting the

model is a good fit to the data.

Table 13
Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients

		Chi-square	df	Sig.
Step 1	Model	23.891	4	.000

Table 14
Model Summary Table

Step	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R^2	Nagelkerke R^2
1	160.376	.144	.206

Table 15
Hosmer and Lemeshow Test

Step	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
1	13.85	8	.086

Next, results of the binary logistic regression analysis yielded a classification accuracy

percentage of 74.7, indicating that 74.7% of the model was correctly predicted. Two of the four

independent variables which included gender, sexual orientation, race, and age were found to be

statistically significant as shown in Table 15. Gender $p = .000$ and age $p = .014$ were found to be

statistically significant with, males being more likely to fall in the high SPE category than females. Gender rendered an *OR* = 4.321 indicating that males are 4.3 times more likely to earn a higher score on the SPE scale than the females. As a reminder, males were coded as (1) and females as (0), thereby males were selected as the reference group for analysis and interpretation. The same method of coding was utilized for age with two categories which included older adult (1) and young adult (0) category, based on Erickson's (1991) differentiation in age groups over the lifespan of humans. Age rendered a *OR* = 2.636, suggesting that older adults were 2.6 times more likely to receive a higher score on the SPE scale. Therefore, the model suggest that older adults are more likely to fall into the high SPE category than young adults. In response to research question three, the null hypothesis is partially rejected. Gender and age, independently or in combination, do predict self-perceived employability.

Table 16
Variables in the Equation

		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1	What is your gender?	1.464	.407	12.906	1	.000	4.321
	Which race best describes you?	.666	.403	2.730	1	.098	1.946
	What is your sexual orientation?	.520	.411	1.603	1	.206	1.682
	How old are you?	.969	.396	5.983	1	.014	2.636
	Constant	2.426	.437	30.820	1	.000	.088

4. Does a certain disability type (i.e., sensory, mental, or physical) predict self-perceived employability?

H₀ 4: Different disability types (mental, sensory, physical), independently or in combination, do not predict self-perceived employability.

H_a 4: Different disability types (mental, sensory, physical), independently or in

combination, do predict self-perceived employability.

The results of the Phi correlation for research question four were not found to be statistically significant. Type of disability was categorized into two distinct groups, individuals with a physical disabilities and those without physical disabilities. According to Akoglu (2018) this signifies virtually no relationship between disability type and self-perceived employability. The contingency table suggests that individuals with non-physical disabilities are more likely to score high in SPE than those with physical disabilities. Therefore, the null hypothesis is supported, there is no relationship between disability type and SPE.

Table 17
Symmetric Measures

	Value	Approximate Sig.
Phi	.050	.535
Cramer's V	.050	.535
N of Valid Cases	154	

Table 18
Crosstabulations

		Disability types		
		Non-physical disability	Physical disability	Total
SPE Levels	Low	66	44	110
	High	24	20	44
Total		90	64	154

5. Is there a relationship between level of education and self-perceived employability?

   H₀ 5: There is no relationship between level of education and self-perceived

   employability?

H_a 5: There is a relationship between level of education and self-perceived

employability?

Next, the Phi correlation was most appropriate to evaluate research question five due to

the number of variables (level of education and SPE) and the dichotomous nature of each

variable (Weidmaier, 2018). Level of education was categorized into two groups: up to a

bachelor's degree and graduate degree/beyond while SPE was categorized into high/low values.

In response to research question five, the Phi correlation yielded a $\phi = .230$, $p = .004$ which,

according to Recio (2017) and Akoglu (2018), signifies a positive weak correlation between

level of education and SPE. The contingency table revealed that participants with a graduate

degree and beyond are more likely to score higher on the SPE scale than participants with up to a

bachelor's degree. Although, very little variation in SPE is accounted for by level of education,

the null hypothesis is rejected. There is a relationship between level of education and self-

perceived employability.

Table 19
Symmetric Measures

	Value	Approximate Sig.
Phi	.230	.004
Cramer's V	.230	.004
N of Valid Cases	154	

Table 20
Crosstabulations

		Level of Education		
		Up to a bachelor's degree	Graduate degree/beyond	Total
SPE Levels	Low	77	33	110
	High	20	24	44

Table 20, continued.

Total		97	57	154

6. Is there a relationship between years of work experience and self-perceived employability?

    H₀ 6: There is no relationship between years of work experience and self-perceived employability.

    Hₐ 6: There is a relationship between years of work experience and self-perceived employability.

Research question six was addressed using the Phi correlation and yielded a $\phi = .222$, which indicates a positive weak relationship between years of work experience and SPE. Although, statistically significant $p = .006$, years of experience do not account for much of the variance in SPE. The contingency table revealed that participants with 11 years or more of work experience were more likely to have high self-perceived employability than those participants with up to ten years of work experience. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and there is a relationship between years of work experience and SPE.

Table 21
Symmetric Measures

	Value	Approximate Sig.
Phi	.222	.006
Cramer's V	.222	.006
N of Valid Cases	154	

Table 22
Crosstabulations

Years of work experience

		Up to 10 years	11 years or more	Total
SPE Levels	Low	67	43	110
	High	16	26	44
Total		83	71	154

7. Is there a relationship between employment status and self-perceived employability?

H₀7: There is no relationship between employment status and self-perceived employability.

Hₐ7: There is a relationship between employment status and self-perceived employability.

Finally, research question seven was evaluated using the Phi correlation and yielded a ϕ = -.233, p = .004 signifying a negative weak relationship between employment status and SPE. Although employment status is statistically significant it accounts for very little of the variance in SPE. The contingency table results indicate that participants who not employed are more likely to score lower on the SPE scale than participants who are employed. The null hypothesis is rejected. There is a relationship between employment status and SPE.

Table 23
Symmetric Measures

	Value	Approximate Sig.
Phi	-.233	.004
Cramer's V	.233	.004
N of Valid Cases	154	

Table 24
Crosstabulations

Are you employed?

		Employed	Not employed	Total
SPE Levels	Low	72	38	110
	High	39	5	44
Total		111	43	154

Summary

The data analysis and results presented in this chapter were in response to the research questions and supporting hypotheses posed in chapters one and three. Several variables including race, gender, sexual orientation, level of education, disability type, years of experience, and employment status were hypothesized to have some degree of influence on self-perceived employability. The SPE scale takes a measure of one's belief in his or her ability to seek, acquire, and maintain employment in and outside of his or her current employer. In short, higher scores on the AROS scale, which addresses the beliefs, attitudes, and emotional reactions from people of color in relation to devaluation of one's own group and patterns of thinking were found to decrease the likelihood of being in the high category in SPE. (Campon & Carter, 2015). The variables mentioned above were found to account for between 0.004% to 20.6% of the variance accounted for in SPE. However, there were no significant variables associated with collective self-esteem, which evaluates the esteem derived by way of the social group one has membership in. This study was intended to evaluate people with disabilities in relation to their other social identities and SPE without comparing them to people without disabilities, thereby curtailing the exclusion of intersectionality in disability studies and extending the literature beyond ableism to include racism, sexism, heterosexism (Goethals et al., 2015).

Next, chapter five will consist of a detailed explanation of all findings yielded from the current study in addition to the limitations. The findings will be compared and contrasted against

previous studies completed on this subject matter. Finally, implications for rehabilitation

educators, rehabilitation counselors, students and disability advocates will be addressed.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This section provides a compendium and logic for the current study. Conclusions are

drawn from the results of the current study and compared with the findings from previous studies

within the subject area. Implications for rehabilitation professionals, students, educators, and

future studies are presented and addressed. Finally, limitations are presented for the purpose of

generalizing and utilizing the results from the current study.

Rationale

The United States has made prodigious strides in equalizing educational opportunities

such as (a) Brown vs. Board of Education 1954, (b) access to employment through the Civil

Rights Movement 1964, (c) access for people with disabilities with the passage of the

Americans with Disabilities Act 1990, (d) voting rights through the Women's suffrage Act 1919,

and marriage equality through the Equality Act 2015 (Geismer, 2016; American Civil Liberties

Union, 2020). In lieu of efforts made at the federal, state, and local levels, people with

disabilities, people of color, women, and members of the LGBT communities are still

disproportionately affected by high unemployment rates and gender wage gaps (U.S. Bureau of

Labor Statistics, 2020). According to Goethals (2015) the disability an individual has often time

takes precedence over the other social identities he or she embodies (i.e., being a woman, person

of color, or LGBT). Additionally, Chu and Posner (2013) posit that layering these identities can

exacerbate the experience of discrimination thereby widening the wage gap and increasing unemployment rates. Finally, David (2013) contends that internalized oppression is a byproduct of the historical oppressive nature in in which women, people of color, people with disabilities and LGBT members have experienced due to their minority status and can have detrimental effects on psychological stress (Campon & Carter, 2015; Szymanski & Gupta, 2009). Vanhercke et al. (2013) suggest that employability includes personal psychological factors such as self as self-perception, self-efficacy, and education while structural factors include organizational demands, career transitions, and financial incentives.

Presentation of Findings

Research question one was developed to address whether or not a relationship existed between multiple internalized oppressions such as (a) identifying as Hispanic, (b) identifying as a female, (c) having a disability, (d) identifying as lesbian, gay, or bisexual, and self-perceived employability. The Appropriated Racial Oppression Scale evaluated the race portion of the question while the Collective Self Esteem Scale addressed all other social identities such as gender, disability type, and LGBT membership. A binary logistic regression was performed to answer research question one and the results revealed that a relationship does exist between multiple internalized oppressions and self-perceived employability. More specifically, the scores from the AROS were found to be statistically significant, suggesting that as scores increased on the AROS (the more oppressed an individual felt as a result of race), the less likely that participant was to score high in self-perceived employability. There is a relationship between multiple internalized oppressions and self-perceived employability, and the null hypothesis was rejected. These results are consistent with Szymanski and Gupta (2009) who posited that internalized racism, internalized heterosexism, racist events, and heterosexist events influence

psychological distress. However, CSE which is composed of membership esteem, private esteem, and public esteem was not found to be significant in predicting self-perceived employability. In contrast, Presti et al (2020) suggests that self-esteem positively predicted employability. Additionally, Heatherton and Polivy (1991) hypothesized that overall higher self-esteem which is a core component of collective self-esteem was positively correlated with higher self-perceived employability (Crocker et al.,1994). Gordijn and Boven (2009) suggest that internalizing negative stereotypes undermines oneself perception. Therefore, it perceivable that a negative self-evaluation may not be helpful to self-perceived employability (Ellis & Taylor, 1983).

The results may be in part be due to a rise in ethnonationalism (pride in a country based solely on the benefits of a particular race/ethnic group), which has been amplified and exacerbated over the past 5 years beginning with the 2016 U. S. Elections. Though strides towards equality have been made, volatile race relations have been overtly woven into the core of America's history. People of color have not reached a point of satisfaction or content in this country with the exclusion and mistreatment they endure based on systematic and institutionalized oppression. Donald Trump's bid for the presidential seat perpetuated the volatility of this country's issues with race, by using socially and politically divisive tactics to conjure support for his party. However, these actions not only created a wider gap politically and socially ,but racially as well (Eckhouse, 2020). People of color were once again at the forefront of a longstanding argument over about America's post racial façade and ideologies seeking atonement for past and current wrongdoings. The results of this study may be a result of the zeitgeist or spirit of the times as it relates to race and its impact on self-perceived employability.

Research question two was designed to evaluate the relationship between collective self-esteem and membership in multiple minority groups such as race, gender, sexual orientation, and disability type. A binary logistic regression was performed, and the results revealed that there was no relationship between gender, race, sexual orientation, disability type, and CSE. Zucker et al (2019) examine gender collective self-esteem in a study assessing the level of collective self-esteem pre and post 2016 U.S. elections in specific voter types (i.e., female/male republicans and male/female democrats). The results contradict the current study and point to a statistically significant relationship that exist between male democrats and collective self-esteem. Post-election scores in collective self-esteem for male democrats decreased significantly whereas female/male republicans and female democrats did not show a decrease or increase in collective self-esteem (Zucker et al., 2019). Race and collective self-esteem as examined by Thai (2017) indicated that Asian women who experienced microaggressions scored lower in self-esteem as well as collective self-esteem which is in direct contrast of the results posed in the current study. Similarly, Johnson (2020) suggests that African Americans who experienced racist events not only scored higher in internalized shame, but self-esteem was also negatively associated with internalized shame which is also a by-product of internalized oppression (David, 2013). In terms of disability and CSE, Recio (2020) contend that perceived and group discrimination related to disability influence self-esteem which refute the results posed in the current study . Sexual orientation, self-esteem, and collective self-esteem were addressed by Rubino et al. (2018) in a sample of lesbians with depression and found that there are significant relationships between internalized homophobia, self-esteem and collective self-esteem which is in direct opposition of the results posed in the current study regarding sexual orientation and CSE. The null hypothesis

for research question two is supported, there is no relationship between CSE and the predictor variables (race, gender, sexual orientation, and disability type).

With regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, and disability type and CSE, the findings of research question two could be best explained by residual feelings of isolation, aloneness, detachment stemming from a global pandemic that drastically impeded the social aspect of humanity. According to Goldman and Galea (2014), mental health is vulnerable to large scale traumatic events and the economic and social ramifications of those events such as a global pandemic and civil unrest can cause a detriment to mental health. Essentially, the pandemic stifled the ability to relate, connect, and gain social capital through social settings and shared experiences. The Covid-19 Pandemic not only crippled the economy world-wide, but it also created crippling effects on mental health. For example, depression in the U.S. more than tripled during the pandemic and especially in those individuals who experienced job loss (Ettman et al., 2020). Since CSE is related to the esteem one has based on his or her social identities, it is feasible that with the rise in depression and anxiety due to the Covid-19 pandemic, people are not feeling as connected and related to those identities and social groups as they once were.

Research question three was selected to assess the relationship between specific characteristics (race, gender, age, sexual orientation) and self-perceived employability by way of binary logistic regression . Gender was found to be statistically significant, such that men were more likely to score higher in SPE than their female counterparts which is consistent with Pitan and Muller (2020) who found that male students scored higher in self-perceived employability than female students in a sample of university college students. Similarly, Donald et al. (2017) performed a hierarchical regression analysis and found that males more so than females perceived themselves to be more employable, suggesting that gender has an impact on self-

perceived employability. In contrast, Jackson and Wilton (2017) did not find gender to have a moderator effect on self-perceived employability in a group of undergraduate business students. Additionally, age was also found to be statistically significant which suggests that older adults are more likely to fall into the high SPE category than young adults. Similarly, Sok et al. (2013) contend that higher perceived employability is strongly correlated with older adults (over age 40) more so that younger adults (18-40 years of age). Berglund et al. (2014) and Dixon et al. (2013) propose that a strong relationship exists between age and perceived employability, such that younger adults commonly perceive better prospects in the open labor market than older adults. Berglund and Wallinder (2015) found that younger adults who were highly educated (Bachelor's degree and beyond) showed higher levels of perceived employability than older adults (55 – 65 years of age) with lower education. The researchers suggest this may be attributed to older workers finding it difficult to find comparable jobs to their current position due to established human capital with that respective employer, whereas younger workers view the open labor market based on preference and qualifications rather than human capital and seniority (Berglund & Wallinder, 2015).

The wealth gap in America may contribute to the findings related to research question three. As mentioned in chapter two, women on average earn less than their male counterparts for the same jobs with the same educational background. The gender gap is evidenced by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission where 42% of the cases reported are a result of complaints filed by women for workplace discrimination based on equal work, equal pay discrepancies (Pew Research Center, 2017). Furthermore, the civil rights act of 1964 provided legal safety faculties to ensure discrimination against minorities including women were deterred. However, the Civil rights act alone was not enough to completely extinguish the problem.

Loopholes and measures were also put in place that protect certain institutions and companies from compliance such as the size of the company and the number of employees. In terms of earnings and poverty, women in general, women of color and more specifically women of color with disabilities are among the lowest earners in America, with some living 200% below the federal poverty level (Fredriksen-Goldsen et al. 2013). In sum, it is perceivable that the gender gap, glass ceiling, and loopholes within the law contribute to men being more likely to view themselves as highly employable than women.

Research question four is concerned with disability type (sensory, mental, or physical) and self-perceived employability and addressed using the Phi correlation coefficient. The results of the current study suggest there is no relationship between disability type and self-perceived employability. However, it is important to note that perceived impact of disability (seen and unseen disabilities) is negatively correlated with perceived employability such that people with specific language disorders score higher in perceived employability that individuals with physical disabilities, mental disabilities, and persons with multiple disabilities (Magrin et al. 2019). Research shows that having a disability often times impedes the process of acquiring and maintaining employment (Lindsay et al., 2015) commonly due to attitudinal barriers such as people with disabilities are not as productive, are a liability. Oftentimes, individuals with disabilities are viewed through the medical model lens that highlights the disadvantages of having a disability rather than the environmental and or attitudinal barriers (Goering, 2015). For example, Fishkin (2014) provide context for employability and disability through a process called "bottlenecking" where a person with a disability must pass through a narrow intersection between (employability/disability) due to the historic oppressive treatment of persons with disability to prove (normalness). In proving this normalness, the person with a disability is

commonly perceived not to be able to work and if he or she can work, the disabling condition is not believed to be true (Fishkin, 2014). More importantly, people with disabilities are viewed as high-risk employees, incompetent, less productive, not flexible, and more likely to have increased absenteeism (Fraser et al., 2011). A recent study examining the capacity and capability of individuals with disabilities highlight their ability to perform complex work tasks, even if the disability is substantial (Agran et al., 2016). Considering that employment rates for people disabilities are considerably lower than those without disabilities, transitions in the workforce and challenges in job seeking, securement, and maintaining are perceived as a need to evince normalness (Gewurtz, 2016). Thus, people with disabilities are repeatedly in position to assert themselves as capable individuals who can live independently, participate in gainful employment, express sexuality, and become parents (Vlachou & Papananou, 2018).

People with disabilities are often perceived through a lens of ineptitude and/or pity which are neither attractive perceptions for perspective employers. This particular research is concerned with the type of disability (sensory, physical, or mental an individual was born with or acquired after birth. The categories for this study were people with physical disabilities and non-physical disabilities whereby there was no variance detected in SPE. However, Collela and Bruyere (2011) cited aesthetic anxiety as an inhibitor to hiring individuals with disabilities which suggests employers are insecure about hiring people with noticeable or visual disabilities for fear of becoming less visually appealing to consumers. The results of this study may be attributed to the fact that having a disability in general supersedes disability type in terms of self-perceived employability. Researchers have already drawn similar conclusions from studies comparing people without disabilities to those with disabilities and noting that people without disabilities (PWODs) tend to be viewed more employable than the latter group (Ju et al., 2012) which is

evidenced in the number of employed PWDs versus PWODs. Even so, the literature is overly saturated with comparing those with disabilities against those without disabilities, thus this study sought to compare types of disabilities rather than the former.

Research question five examines the relationship between level of education and self-perceived employability evaluated using the Phi correlation. In the current study level of education was categorized into two groups (up to a bachelor's degree and graduate degree/beyond). The results of the Phi correlation revealed that relationship a does exist between level of education and self-perceived employability. To this extent, people with a graduate degree and beyond were more likely to score high in SPE rather than those participants with up to a bachelor's degree. Eichhorst et al. (2013) postulate that education has become increasing important in job seeking and employment securement. Multiple studies have confirmed that employees with bachelor's degrees and beyond generally feel there are more job opportunities for him or her in the open labor market (Andeson and Pontusson 2007; Berglund et al. 2014; Berntson et al. 2006). According to the human capital theory posed by Becker (1997) people with little to no education are more vulnerable to unemployment and have less access to opportunities in the open labor market. However, Nui et al. (2019) found that PhD level graduates exhibited lower self-perceived employability than those graduates with only a bachelor's degree which is in opposition of the current study and may be attributed to over-qualification in the labor market for graduates with upper-level degrees.

These results may be best elucidated by considering academic success and educational attainment as a means of increasing self-perception and self-confidence as it relates to career success. Huang (2015) offer similar notions that academic success contributes to increased self-confidence and a better self-perception in terms of career aspirations after analyzing survey data

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from a sample of 220 college students. Considering Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory which highlights the process by which individual pursue and attain educational and career-based achievements the association between the two solidified. The theory supports both cognitive and social influences that impact career attainment and development such as personal and environmental factors. Olsen (2012) and Tymon (2013) both lend support to a positive association between highly educated individuals and self-perceived employability, such that individuals who are highly education tend to find more advantageous and readily available employment opportunities, lower rates of unemployment, and reported higher wages (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2016). Therefore, although a statistically significant relationship was not found between educational attainment level and SPE, it is understood and feasible why individuals in the current study with master's degree and beyond were more likely to score higher in SPE.

Research question six addresses whether a relationship exist between years of experience and self-perceived employability. Specifically, the results of this study show a weak positive correlation between years of experience and SPE, such that participants with 11 years or more of experience were more likely to score higher in self-perceived employability than those with up to ten years of experience. Other studies such as Nazar (2012) contend that those with longer and more stable work histories do not perceive themselves as highly employable. Van Der Heijden (2009) attribute lower self-perceived employability to individuals with longer work histories to stigma attached to older workers, where their skillsets and capacity to develop as an employee are often met with skepticism and bias. In a similar vein, Irwin et al. (2019) and Leon and Morales (2019) did not find duration of work experience to have an effect on perceived employability. However, Qenani et al. (2014) concur with the results of the current study and

posit that graduate students with work experience were more likely to view themselves as highly employable than those without any work experience. Additionally, perceived employability and work experience were positively related in a recent study by Nui et al. (2019) where employees with ten years or more of work experience in their profession scored higher in SPE than individuals with less than ten years. Although, years of experience did not have account for much of the variance in SPE in the current study, the predictor variable was still statistically significant, and the null hypothesis was rejected.

Perhaps the results of question six in the current study are best explained by the employment conditions during and post pandemic in which unemployment levels spiked setting new records globally. More specifically, as an apparent result of the economic downfall of the world's economy due to Covid-19, it is understood that with fewer jobs, the labor market opportunities shrink for those with and without certain .characteristics. For example, a recent graduate with no work experience may face difficulty in an uncertain labor market whereas an individual with a moderate work history or more years of experience may perceive the labor market as easily maneuverable. Qenani et al. (2014) concur that work experience is a factor in how individuals view their potential in the open labor market. In a similar vein, Rothwell et al. (2009) posit similar notions that work experience strengthens perceived employability in post graduate students. Work experience is noted to strengthen an employees' skillset, confidence, self-concept, and wage-earning capacity (Jackson & Wilton, 2016), therefore it is understandable in relation to the current study that work experience, although a weak association is positively associated with increased self-perceived employability. Work experience directly influences self-confidence, self-perception and perceived employability which is constructed through gainful employment status, interning, or volunteer work. Therefore, the final research

question is derived and examines to what extent does employment status relate to self-perceived employability.

Finally, research question seven was evaluated using the Phi correlation and the results indicated a statistically significant relationship between employment status and SPE. Although, little to no variance was explained by employment status, a negative weak relationship does exist between the independent and dependent variable. The current study findings suggest that participants who were unemployed were more likely to score low in SPE than those who were employed. The results are consistent with other studies on the topic citing that individuals who are employed are more likely to view themselves as highly employable. Kirves et al. (2014) assert that perceived employability is positively associated with employed permanent workers, whereas Nazar and Van der Heijden (2012) maintain that individuals who are employed perceive the external labor to be sparse in opportunities and less accessible due to a selective skillset based mostly on experience. Furthermore, it is presumed that being employed is positively related to perceived employability because steady employment strengthens self-confidence (Jackson & Wilton, 2017).

In sum, the results of the final research question may be explicated through understanding how being employed provides workers the ability to network, develop transferable and interpersonal skills thereby influencing self-perception, self-confidence, and perceived employability (Jackson & Wilton, 2017; Kinnunen & de Cuyper, 2014). Makikangas et al. (2013) convey a similar sentiment noting the importance of self-perceived employability and surmise that employees are probable to act in favor of their perceptions which will inherently shape their job seeking and labor market behaviors. In conclusion, employment is an essential component of social interaction and social capital building. Research has shown that

employment is positively correlated with multiple aspects of life including financial resources, self-perception/confidence, perceived employability, career satisfaction, and social engagement/networking (Bandura, 1997; Gonzalez-Roma et al., 2016).

Implications

Several implications may be drawn from the current study. The findings could prove beneficial for informing best practices for counselors, educators, and researchers. Self-perceived employability is at the center of career and vocational counseling . Therefore, it may assist professionals within the field of rehabilitation counseling to understand how demographic factors such as race, age, disability type, education level, gender, employment status, and sexual orientation interact and influence self-perceived employability. Self-esteem as it relates to social groups and identities was explored by assessing collective self-esteem. The current literature negates any identity outside of disability status when addressing people with disabilities, such that other important factors such as gender and race and not considered. Social identities and the complex interactions they produce are important to address during the vocational process for the population served, in the classroom, and researchers who seek to fill critical gaps in the literature. This section will lend credence to the utility and practicality of this study for educators, rehabilitation counselors/professionals, and researchers.

Educators

Prior to this study people with disabilities were excluded from intersectionality studies due to disability superseding all other identities such as race, gender, sexual orientation, and disability type. Through this analysis I sought to inform educators on how varying social identities may influence self-perceived employability in the populations served. It is essential to acknowledge how people with disabilities maneuver the intersection of more than one minority

status identity by which discrimination may take form for any of the following reasons i.e., identifying as female, identifying as a person of color, having a disability, or identifying as sexual minority. Educators may build on the current study to inform future professionals on facilitating job seeking behaviors in people with disabilities where they perceive their skills as valuable in the open labor market and to perspective employers (Rothwell & Arnold, 2007). It is also important to note that employment indirectly influences self-perception, self-esteem (private and collective), and confidence associated with securing and maintaining employment (Jackson & Wilton, 2017), thereby increasing self-perceived employability.

Rehabilitation Counselors

Next, the current study could be useful in informing Rehabilitation counselors in service delivery of individuals with disabilities, especially when providing job placement. The disproportionality of employed persons with disabilities versus employed persons without disabilities has been noted repeatedly in the literature for decades. Although, there are many extenuating circumstances, this is largely due in part to attitudinal barriers, misconceptions, and bias rooted in ableism. It is recommended that counselors consider positive reinforcements for people with disabilities in acquiring and maintaining employment such as access and opportunity to build social capital in the workplace, financial stability, networking, and skill building. These aforementioned factors are also constructed through gainful employment and influence labor market mobility and prospects. Therefore, it is recommended that rehabilitation counselors not only acknowledge intersectionality, self-perceived employability, but also the positive impact gainful employment has on people with disabilities (Gonzalez-Roma et al., 2016). In keeping with the findings of the current study it may be beneficial to rehabilitation counselors to implement self-perception, overall well-being, and confidence building exercises in the

rehabilitation process (i.e., positive psychology and motivational interviewing). The basic components of positive psychology suggest that every individual embodies certain personal traits and the yearning to (a) live more fulfilling and purposeful life, (b) foster and acknowledge personal strengths, and (c) positively aggrandize their experiences of work, relationships (platonic and romantic), and recreation (Chou et al., 2013; Seligman, 2011). The strength building ideology of vocational rehabilitation counseling provides a strong basis for incorporating the proponents of positive psychology in the vocational rehabilitation process (Catalano et al., 2011; Wright, 1983). The practice of pinpointing strengths will presumably highlight a more in depth understanding of the clients, assist in a creating a well-rounded working alliance, and situate the vocational rehabilitation professionals to help clients in becoming aware of their personal strengths which is an essential part of setting more manageable and attainable goals (Chou et al., 2013). Next motivational interviewing (MI) as described by Miller and Rollinick (1995), is a client centered process that seeks to encourage change through resolving ambivalence. Motivational interviewing has been cited as method of improving vocational outcome for individuals participating in employment support services (Bohman et al., 2011; Magnussen et al., 2007; Page & Tchernitskaia, 2014). Britt et al. (2018) used MI to promote employment and found that motivational interviewing not only increased employment service participation, but also strengthen job retention, and motivation to seek and maintain employment. More specifically, a technique used to elicit confidence is change talk which focuses on assisting the client in becoming aware of past successes and what actions or tasks led to those successes while also acknowledging failures but re-labeling them as attempts (Miller and Rollinick, 1995). Finally, the counselor should encourage the client to focus on strengths in addition to social and/or physical supports that facilitate change processes (Miller &

Rollnick, 1995; Wagner & McMahon, 2004). If these two techniques are implemented in the vocational rehabilitation process, it is likely that employment outcomes may become more favorable in addition increasing client confidence and perception. Counselors may also take these findings and advocate for clients by informing perspective employers on the needs of their clients as well as contradict any pre-conceived notions or biases about hiring people with disabilities. The World Report on Disability, (2011) notes that people with disabilities represent the largest minority globally. If given the opportunity this group can exponentially contribute to the labor market when provided the right opportunities, skills development, and diversity appreciated. Counselors can find the empirical based literature regarding employers who have hired persons with disabilities and noted a positive experience to show to employers. And although employers can be educated about the employability and skills qualified persons with disabilities can bring to the job, unfortunately it is difficult to change attitudes towards employers who may be racist or have strong religious views about LGBT individuals.

Researchers

Finally, this study is important to the field of rehabilitation counseling in preparing educators, counselors, and researchers to be cognizant of the complexities of intersectionality, specifically in people with disabilities. Moreover, it is also important for rehabilitation counseling researchers to understand the process through which self-perceived employability is developed and how it contributes to the overall success of employment seeking behaviors and sustainability. One recommendation for future research is to consider more than two genders for those individuals who do not identify with the traditional male and female epithets. Society is evolving past traditional labeling and the literature should contend with those changes. In a similar vein, it is also recommended that researchers allow participants to select multiple

disabilities and evaluate those interactions due to the fact that some individuals do have comorbid disorders or multiple disabling conditions.

Limitations

The first limitation of this study concerns selection bias. A convenience sample was used specifically with social media platforms (i.e., Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat) which also limited the sample to individuals who had the technology to access these platforms. The study was also limited to individuals who had a disability which inherently limits the generalizability of the results due to the participation stipulation. The results will not be generalizable to all people with disabilities unless they have the same characteristics of the participants in the study. Another limitation is that the data will be collected utilizing self-report measures which essentially makes it impossible to determine whether or not participants complete the questionnaire themselves or if they fully understand the questions being asked of them. Relatedly, any self-reporting survey assumes the participant will be truthful in his or her responses.

Final statement

In sum, the current study highlighted varying aspects of SPE with regard to intrinsic and extrinsic factors, demographic data, and collective self-esteem. Considering, that the United States of America is known to be one of the most progressive nations infamous for leading the world in human rights and advocacy, people with disabilities still experience unemployment, underemployment, and discrimination at greater levels that any other minority group in the world. Based on ability as a stand-alone concept, these individuals are still more likely to fall victim to poverty and homelessness than any other group (Disability Compendium, 2016). However, when layering identities in addition to disability, the rate of poverty increases well

beyond that of 200% below the poverty line (Fredriksen-Goldsen et al. 2013). It is the intent of

the researcher that persons with disability are allowed the opportunity to fully integrate in society

personally, socially, and through gainful employment. Hopefully, the current study can be used

to prepare students, inform counselors, and provide guidance for researchers looking to explore

similar constructs and expand the knowledge base in the everchanging field of rehabilitation

counseling.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

The author, Kerra LaJoy Daniel was born on January 8, 1991, in Birmingham, Alabama. Her family relocated a few years later to a small rural town called Greensboro, Alabama known for its rich soil and history. She is a graduate of Alabama State University where she earned a Bachelor of Science in Rehabilitation Service with a concentration in Addiction studies in 2012 (Magna Cum Laude) and a Master of Rehabilitation Counseling 2014 (Summa Cum Laude). She is a certified rehabilitation counselor. After graduate school, she went on to work at the state level as an Independence through Employment Counselor and later for the federal government as a Legal Benefits Authorization Specialist. While working for the federal government she also served as an adjunct instructor at Alabama State University and volunteered at the local library in her community to assist students ages K-8 in reading and cursive writing skills. After her time with the federal government, she returned to the classroom to pursue her doctoral studies. Kerra received her PhD in Rehabilitation counseling from the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley in 2021. Her research interests include intersectionality (ableism, sexism, racism, and heterosexism), self-perceived employability, and collective self-esteem. Contact information: kerra.danielcrc@gmail.com